B.A.S.I.C. *Extra*

Brothers And Sisters In Christ September 18, 1994

FIRST MCC OBSERVES SAMARITAN SUNDAY TODAY

Once a year, First MCC of Atlanta honors the contribution that Samaritan College makes to UFMCC by recognizing Samaritan Sunday. Today the congregation has the opportunity to help support Samaritan College by using love offering envelopes. Samaritan College provides academic preparation for people who were interested in becoming a licensed clergy person in UFMCC.

Samaritan College has chosen to present classes through Samaritan/District Partnerships and through correspondence. The Samaritan District Partnership provides accessible, non-homophobic, academic, and experiential education by using Samaritan approved faculty to teach required courses within the District. Samaritan correspondence courses contain the same material, utilize the same textbooks, and have the same objectives as courses taught in the classroom setting.

Recently, Dr. Mona West, Academic Dean of Samaritan and former staff member of First MCC of Atlanta, conducted a major review of Samaritan coursework. With the assistance of teams of Samaritan faculty, each course was reviewed and revised to better address the academic and experiential needs of Samaritan students. Samaritan is working with other academic institutions to develop a program that will allow Samaritan students to transfer credit for their coursework to those institutions.

Your support will help Samaritan College continue to provide academic certification for licensure for UFMCC clergy and to become an even stronger academic institution. If you have questions about Samaritan, talk to Dr. John Moore, the current Education Facilitator for the GLAD/Samaritan District Partnership, or Dr. Ray Barreras the former facilitator. Or, talk to clergy who have recently completed the program--Rev. Chip Carson and Rev. Doug Johnson. You could also talk to a current student--Student Clergy Dee Crumm. Each of these people would be pleased to tell you more about the GLAD/Samaritan Partnership.

GOLD C BOOK SALES LAG

Although this is the fourth year of Gold C coupon book sales for First MCC, sales have never been so slow. Only 27 books have been sold to date (150 was the goal, with 102 sold last year). Gold C has agreed to extend our sales period two more weeks. The books contain hundreds of discount coupons for food and services allowing purchaser's to "save" the $12 purchase price within weeks. The Pastor's Discretionary Fund receives the $5 profit per book, providing assistance for those in need throughout the year. Stop at the Bookstore and see the savings that can be yours!

CELL GROUP MEETINGS

(for everyone, not just members)

2nd and 4th Tuesday at 7:30 pm Beverly Madding	325-4143
2nd and 4th Tuesday at 7:30 pm Tom Larson	365-0980
1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8:00 pm Mary Jones	368-9944
2nd and 4th Thursday at 7:00 pm Erin Wertenberger	607-7448
2nd and 4th Friday at 7:00 pm Liz Pope	732-0617
2nd and 4th Friday at 7:30 pm Randy Starnes Cobb	874-5732
2nd and 4th Sunday at 7:00 pm Gwen Rice Macon	912-988-8443

VISITOR PACKETS NOW AVAILABLE

First-time visitors to our services will receive a packet containing information about First MCC outreach programs and services. A representative of the Membership Committee will be in the lobby after worship to present the folders as newcomers leave.

Did You Know?

Our pastor is this years chair of the Council of Gay/Lesbian Religious Organizations(COGLRO). The group meets quarterly in our building.

Calendar of Events

(Week of September 18th)

Sunday

7:00 pm	Power Hour
7:30 pm	Services with Rev. Ray Brown

Wednesday

6:30 pm	Choir Practice
7:30 pm	Services with Rev. Chip Carson

Thursday

7:00 pm	Affinity Workshop on Co-dependency with Student Clergy Dee Crumm in Fellowship Hall.
7:30 pm	Social Committee Meeting in Hose Hall
7:30 pm	AIDS Outreach Sewing Guild

Saturday

10:00 am	Building and Grounds clean-up.

Next Sunday

9:00 am	Morning Worship with Rev. Reid Christensen
10:05 am	Choir Practice
	Inquirer's Class C
	Adult Bible Class with Erin Wertenberger
11:00 am	Morning Worship with Rev. Reid Christensen
	Children's Sunday School
7:00 pm	Power Hour
7:30 pm	Services with Rev. Ray Brown

Coming

Sept. 29	7:00 pm	Affinity Workshop on Co-dependency with Student Clergy Dee Crumm.
Oct . 2	12:45 pm	Homecoming Dinner on the Grounds.
Oct. 6	7:00 pm	Affinity Workshop on Co-dependency.
Oct. 7	7:30 pm	UFMCC Founders Day Celebration
Oct. 8	6:00 pm	Putt-Putt
Oct. 19	8:30 pm	AIDS Ministry Meeting
Oct. 23	2:00 pm	Annual Congregational Meeting

Other Organizations Using Building.

Sept. 29	7:00 pm	CGLO
Sept. 30	7:00 pm	Marching Band
Oct. 16	2:00 pm	PFLAG Meeting

AA meeting at First MCC?
Help make it possible with your suggestions
Call Dee M. 607-7231

SCOREBOARD: Last week: Attendance -282
Building Fund - $497.16 General Fund - $2,112.85
(Budget - $2,154.00)

Flowers today in honor of Ed Sitton and Bob Russakoff Holy Union.

VOICES NEEDED

Special practices will begin in October for the Christmas Cantata to be presented in December. If you don't have the time for regular choir membership, perhaps this is the time to participant in a significant event for our choir. If you are interested, please contact the Church Office, J.R. Finney II, or Kay Halle. Come make a joyful noise to the Lord with us.

FLOWERS ANYONE?

Fresh flowers have been missing from our sanctuary for several months. Anyone may "furnish" flowers for the services and are asked to clear the date with the office (to avoid duplication). Flowers may be dedicated in celebration of an event or memory of an individual and that information will be published in BASIC Extra.

SEAT OFFERING TOPS $700

During the first week of asking the congregation to share in the cost of moving 430 seats to storage in the proposed sanctuary, over $700 was contributed. Praise God! Envelopes for that purpose will remain in the lobby for the next few weeks.

GIVE A LIFT

It has been called to our attention that several folks need a ride to worship services. If anyone is interested in assisting with this vital ministry, please call the office.

Candidates For Board Election To Secure Packet

Any one interesting in running for the Board of Directors, please see J.R. Finney, John Moore or Kaye Turner for the Nominating Packets.

B.A.S.I.C.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Official Monthly Publication of
First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta

"Sharing God's Love -- Serving Christ By Serving Others"

VOLUME XXIII NUMBER 4 April 1995

Conducting 3-Day Spiritual Renewal

JERI ANN HARVEY RETURNS

One of UFMCC's most dynamic speakers, the Reverend Jeri Ann Harvey, returns to First MCC of Atlanta to conduct Spiritual Renewal services Friday through Sunday, April 28-29-30

Friday and Saturday services will be held at 7:30 pm with a carry-in dinner preceding the Saturday service at 6:00 pm. Jeri Ann will also speak at the 9:00 and 11:00 am Sunday worship celebrations. The Saturday worship will be a healing service, a popular part of her ministry.

After several visits to First MCC, Jeri Ann has become an understandable "favorite" to many members and friends. Attendance increases during visits, attesting to her popularity as a gospel preacher. Her presentation of the gospel message is direct and uncompromising. Her delivery style is laced with humor and touching personal experiences.

Jeri Ann joined the ranks of UFMCC in the early years and has successfully pastored churches in Oklahoma City, Houston, and the Mother Church in Los Angeles. She has served on the Board of Elders of the denomination and currently serves full time as an evangelist. She and her spouse reside in California.

This series of services is an ideal opportunity to introduce others to MCC. Bring a friend!

Reverend Elder Jeri Ann Harvey

JOINT HOLY WEEK SERVICES SET

Again this year the three city MCC's will coordinate Holy Week services, beginning with a Maundy Thursday Seder (Passover Meal and Communion) at Christ Covenant MCC, 778 Rays Road, Stone Mountain, a Tenebrae Service (the recounting of the crucifixion of Christ) on Good Friday at First MCC, and All Saints MCC organizing the communion service for the Sunrise Service on Easter Sunday (celebrating the resurrection of Christ). Rev. Glenna Shepherd will preach.

The Thursday and Friday services will be held at 7:30 pm. The Easter Sunrise Service will begin at 7:00 am with the official "sunrise" happening six minutes later. A $5.00 "offering" is requested to offset food costs for the Seder but there will not be an offering on Friday. The offering taken on the Piedmont Pier on Sunday is traditionally given to one of the non-profit organizations in the city.

FIRST MCC OF ATLANTA

1379 Tullie Road
Atlanta, GA. 30329
Phone: (404) 325-4143
Office Hours: 9 - 5 Monday - Friday

Sundays:	9:00 am	Celebration of Worship
	10:05 am	Adult Bible Study
	11:00 am	Celebration of Worship
	7:00 pm	Power Hour
	7:30 pm	Sunday Evening Worship
Wednesday:	7:30 pm	Midweek Worship

Board of Directors

B	Erin Werterberger	Vice Moderator
O	Al Brannon	Treasurer
A	Jim Hinkley	Clerk
R	Joe Griffin	Member
D	Carol Harris	Member
	Carolyn Jordan	Member
	Tom Larson	Member
	Kaye Turner	Member

Ministerial Staff

M	Rev. Reid L. Christensen	Senior Pastor
I	Rev. Emily A. Bel	Associate Pastor
N	Rev. Chip Carson	Staff Pastor
I	Rev. Douglas Johnson	Staff Pastor
S	Rev. Leevahn Smith	Outreach Ministries
T	Rev. Ray Brown	Christian Education
E	Dee Crumm	Student Clergy
R	Bill Leopard	Deacon Emeritus
I	J.R. Finney II	Deacon
A	Liz Pope	Deacon
L	Bill Selvaggio	Deacon
	Randy Starnes	Deacon

Music Staff

Dr. Tim Tyson	Director of Music
Kay Hale	Accompanist
Victor Host	Accompanist

Office Staff

Beverly Madding	Administrative Assistant

Cell Group Leaders

Joe Griffin		325-0556
Beverly Madding	"WhoSoEvers"	633-9389
Liz Pope	(Douglasville)	732-0617
Gwen Rice	(Macon, GA)	912-988-8443
Bob Scoven	"Phoenix Rising"	455-0563
Randy Starnes	"New Hope for Cobb"	874-5732
Kaye Turner	"Southside Cell"	361-1326
Erin Wertenberger	"Rainbow Shoes"	607-7448

Pastor's Pen..

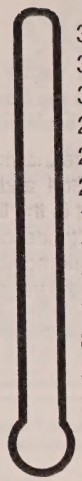
As we involve ourselves with introspection during the season of Lent, and prepare ourselves for the Easter event, several observations about our church come to mind. I'd like to share them.

At the top of the list for any pastor is the individual member's commitment and dedication to God and, in turn, to the church. If God is *really* important in the lives of those we touch, why don't we see better attendance at church? Do you realize that if all of our current members came to church at the same service, we couldn't seat them? We have 200 seats in the temporary sanctuary and 225 members. Furthermore, why do so many members fail to make up their weekly contribution when they miss church, and a much too large percentage of the membership not contribute *regularly* at all? These questions haunt me. Where does our ministry fail to reach the spiritual needs of our membership? What happened to the enthusiasm people had when they joined the church in the first place? How do we motivate people to remain *constant* in their witness for Jesus Christ?

Now, when we approach Easter--the main event of the Christian church--people respond overwhelmingly. When we talk about "occupying the new sanctuary" there is excitement. People want to ***be there*** for that service--sharing in the excitement and glory of accomplishing a difficult (sometimes it seems impossible) task. However, can one really feel a part of the celebration if they haven't participated in getting there? Similarily, can we *really* celebrate Easter if we haven't experienced the Good Fridays in our lives--having witnessed the power of God in difficult situations? Only when we "stay the course" during difficulty do we experience God in the fullest and are able to celebrate God's love for us without reservation.

Due to situations beyond our control with government agencies and various contractors, we may *not* occupy the new sanctuary by Easter! Is that a disaster? Will that be discouraging to many? Will that spell the end of our current growth spiral? **Not** for people of faith! In fact, if a delay occurs, it may well put us in a much stronger financial position to continue with the building plans. Your Board of Directors during the past two years has been operating out of faith--faith that God will provide the necessary funds *through individuals like you* to carry out the ministry of First MCC. Repeatedly items have been approved without the money in hand. A delay in occupying the sanctuary will determine which of us will "stay the course" amid disappointment.

The church will succeed when those involved with it discover the spiritual principle that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Those who join the church *expecting others* to meet their needs, will be disappointed and soon leave. However, those who join the church convinced **God** can meet their needs will remain and help others make that same discovery. It's an attitude of *serving* or *being served*. (continued on page 6)



FMCC Gift$ &
Offering Goal$
$econd Quarter 1995

GOALS ARE GREAT!

by Rev. Ray Brown

They allow us to work toward meaningful levels in our personal life, such as weight loss, or getting into shape physically. Career goals allow us to plan effective use of our talents and resources to reach career plans and plateaus that will advance us in our work settings--both financially and intellectually. The Church is no different. To carry forth an effective ministry we must take into consideration every aspect of what it takes to succeed. To carry on the proper ministry requires proper and sufficient financing. Each quarter our church has a goal to reach certain amounts that will fund all of the ministries that the members have voted to be a part of during the 1995 year. Our financial gifts and offerings go toward reaching those goals. Each month we will highlight how we are succeeding in reaching that quarters financial goal. This quarter, which runs from April through June, our goal is to collect $35,880.00. Our Barometer will help you see where we stand in relationship to reaching our goal. If you miss, remember that expenses continued while you were gone. Your gifts each week are needed and greatly appreciated.

OPPORTUNIES TO GIVE THANK YOU

Portable Communion Set	Ray Edge
Two Offering Plates	Barbara Fisher and Ray Edge
Folding Tables	Barbara Summer and Cary Christian
20-compartment (minimum) mail box	Al Brannon
Glass coffee pots for office coffeemaker	Steve Douglas

INQUIRER'S CLASSES

Classes will be offered Tuesday, April 11th at 7:00 pm in Hose Hall. Each class last about 45 minutes. Inquirer's Class "A" will be at 7:00 pm, with Class "B" at 7:45 and Class "C" to follow at 8:30 pm.

Anyone interested in finding out more about MCC is encouraged to attend. Classes cover areas of Beliefs, Responsibilities, and a little history of the church. Although attendance is required for membership, one need not make that decision prior to taking the class.

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Danielle Holmes
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Bible Smarts...

2 PETER

2 Peter is written to warn the early Christians about false teachers and to ask the people to have faith that Christ will come again. Peter explains, "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies..." (2:1). He continues, "They entice unsteady souls, they have hearts trained in greed" (2:14).

Peter asks the people to have faith that Christ will come again; to remember to live as good Christians and be prepared for the second coming: "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God..." (3:10-13).

Peter closes his letter, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity" (3:18).

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CAN FOOD DRIVE

by Beverly Madding

First MCC has a food pantry which is in need of being stocked so we can help ones who are less fortunate than us. We receive calls on a daily bases from people who are in need of food.

Sunday, April 2nd will be a kick off to start a month of collected canned goods for our food pantry. There will be a box out in the corner of the lobby for you to put your cans in. When you leave out to come to services remember to bring a can of vegetables, box of pasta, or any non-perishable item. This is a way to help others less fortunate.

To know what is right and not do it is as bad as doing wrong.

LIGHTING THE WAY...

by Rev. Emily Bel

Each year the three MCC's in Atlanta gather together at dawn on Easter Sunday to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus. Every year a few brave souls meet even earlier to *light the way* with 100 Luminaria.

We meet with our coffee and/or hot chocolate and go right to work lighting the walkway to the dock at Piedmont Park where we hold the Easter Sunrise services. It's a little work and a lot of fun, especially watching the delighted expressions on the faces of those arriving for worship.

If you'd like to be a part of this once-a-year lighting the way ministry, please see Rev. Emily Bel.

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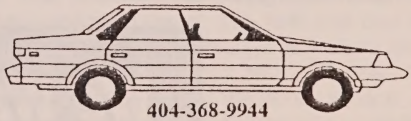


404-368-9944
Mary E. Jones, ASE Certified
Automobile Maintenance and Repair

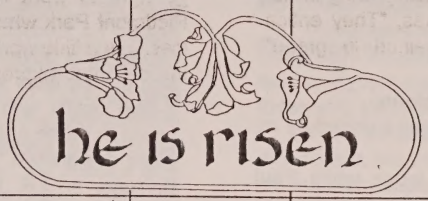
OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

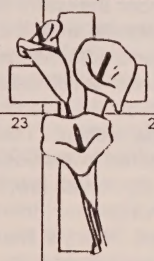
Membership Ministry Staff to phone visitors.
Additional people to serve on Special Social Event Committee.
Someone to "repair" hymnals.
Someone to begin moving chairs into storage area (in prepartion for painting new sanctuary).

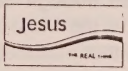
First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta

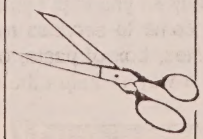
Rev. Reid Christensen
Senior Pastor

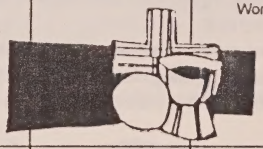
APRIL 1995

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Work/Cleaning Daylight Savings Time Begins Tonight
2 **9am, 11am & 7:30 pm** *Worship Celebration* **10:05 am** Choir Practice Adult Bible Study **7pm** Prayer Power Hour **8:30 pm** Dessert Night	3 **7:30pm** Joe Griffin Cell Group Meeting	4 **7pm** Staff Mtg. **7:30pm** WhoSo-Ever's Cell Mtg	5 **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration*	6 **7pm** Membership Committee Meeting **7pm** Sewing Guild	7	8 Work/Cleaning
Palm Sunday 9 **9am, 11am, & 7:30 pm** *Worship Celebration* **10:05am** Choir Practice Adult Bible Study **2pm** "Homosexuality and the Bible" Workshop **7pm** Prayer Power Hour	10 BASIC deadline for May **7:00 pm** Board Mtg.	11 **7pm** Inquirers Class A **7:30pm** Phoenix Rising Cell Mtg. **7:45pm Inquirers Class "B"** **8:30pm** Inquirer's Class "C"	12 **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration* **8:30pm** VHS Mtg.	13 **7pm** Rainbow Shoes Cell Mtg. **7pm** Sewing Guild **7:30pm** Sedar Supper	Good Friday 14 **7:30pm** Tenebrae **730pm** New Hope Celll Mgt. **7:30pm** Douglas ville Cell Mtg.	15 Work/cleaning
Easter 16 7am Sunrise Services at Peidmont Park on the dock **9am, 11am, & 7:30 pm** *Worship Celebration* **10:05am** Choir Practice Adult Bible Study **7pm** Prayer Power Hour	17 **7:30pm** Joe Griffin Cell Group Meeting	18 **7:30pm** WhoSo-Ever's Cell Mtg	19 **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration* **8:30pm** AIDS Ministry Mtg.	20 **7pm** Rainbow Shoes Cell Mtg. **7pm** Sewing Guild **7:30pm** Bar Ministry Meeting	21	22 Work/Cleaning
23 **9am, 11am, & 7:30 pm** *Worship Celebration* **10:05am** Choir Practice Adult Bible Study **7pm** Prayer Power Hour	24	25 **7:30pm** Phoenix Rising Cell Mtg.	26 Secretaries Day **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration*	27 **7pm** Rainbow Shoes Cell Mtg. **7pm** Sewing Guild	28 **7:30pm** Douglas ville Cell Mtg.. **730pm** New Hope Celll Mtg. **7:30pm** Rev. Elder Jeri Ann Harvey	29 Work/Cleaning **7:30pm** Rev. Elder Jeri Ann Harvey
30 **9am, 11am, & 7:30 pm** *Worship Celebration* **10:05am** Choir Practice Adult Bible Study **7pm** Prayer Power Hour **8:30pm** Dessert Night	May 1 **7:30pm** Joe Griffin Cell Group Meeting	2 **7pm** Ministerial Staff Mtg **7:30pm** WhoSo-Ever's Cell Mtg.	3 **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration*	4 **7pm** Sewing Guild	5 District Conference Montgomery , AL	6 Work/Cleaning District Conference Montgomery, Al









Coming in May Spring District Conference May 5, 6, & 7 in Montgomery
White People Healing Racism Workshop May 20

Bible Quiz

WHO SLEPT THERE?

We're all familiar with the long sleep of Rip Van Winkle. The Bible had a few famous sleepers of its own. Can you identify them?

1. He slept within an encampment as "the army lay around him."
2. Even though he slept upon a rock, he could still dream.
3. He slept on a boat during a raging storm.
4. He slept under a broom tree and was touched by an angel.
5. This fellow slept on a window ledge while Paul preached.
6. They slept in a garden while their leader prayed.
7. He slept at the door of a palace, with all the servants.
8. This suffering man slept in the dust.

Answers

1. Saul, I Samuel 26:7	5. Eutychus, Acts 20:9
2 Jacob, Genesis 28:10-12	6 the disciples, Matt. 26:40
3. Jesus, Matthew 8:22-24	7. Uriah, 2 Samuel 11:9
4. Elijah, 1 Kings 19:5	8. Job 7:21

(Pastor's Pen, Continued from page 2)

With our music ministry growing, our bar ministry expanding, our cell groups multiplying, and our organizational efforts blossoming, individual commitment is obviously increasing. That means God, through us, is meeting spiritual needs--so attendance will rise and financial goals reached!

What a glorious time to be a part of First MCC! The church is beginning to meet the spiritual needs of the people for which it was organized to serve. Praise God!

With love, Reid

THE EASTER SEASON

by Rev. Emily Bel

A continuation of articles on the church seasons

On Easter Sunday, April 16 we begin the Easter season. The altar, pulpit and clergy will be dressed in white, the symbol of innocence and triumph. During the Easter season we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus. The entire season is to be a period of joy and happiness surrounding the placing of Jesus at God's right hand.

During the week before Easter important preparation takes place. The week, begins with Palm Sunday. It introduces us the life of Jesus as He advances toward His passion and death. Thursday celebrates in vivid form the Last Supper of Jesus. Friday commemorates the passion and death of Jesus.

Easter is a movable Feast.. The date is based on the cycles of the moon. Easter is to be "the First Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox. Easter may fall between March 22 and April 25.

"NO SHIRT, NO SHOES, NO SERVICE"

by Ray Barreras

It's time to think about sending shoes to the orphanage in the Dominican Republic again. Ray and J.R. will be going to our missions in that country again right after Easter. Although the shoes our church provided last year were extremely welcome, and in fact may have helped La Escuela de San Salvador to withstand some efforts by a government official to close it down, active kids quickly wear them out. Also needed are shorts and T-shirt outfits with a reasonable uniformity. If you can assist in these efforts, give your donation to the Church office designated "orphan shoes and clothes" or to Ray Barreras or J.R. Finney. $5.00 will provide a pair of sneakers, or $10.00 will provide a really nice outfit for a child. Although MCC's efforts in the Dominican Republic don't demand that the people be "properly dressed", in order for the children to go to school elsewhere than at La Escuela itself, they need to be properly equipped, and obviously the better they are provided for, the more likely our efforts there will be successful. God Bless You for your help. Deadline for monetary contributions to allow shopping is April 9th (Palm Sunday).

"DEAR DEACON"

Q. The lineage of Jesus is traced from Abraham through David to Joseph in Matthew, Chapter 1. Since God is the Parent of Jesus, not Joseph, how can Jesus be claimed as a descendant of King David? What about Mary's lineage?

A. First, we must remember the views held of women at that time in history; that women were the chattel property of men, subject to the man's authority, and were only the "ovens" for the man's seed, which was considered the basis for the formation of life. Lineage was traced through the father, not the mother. Their children would be **HIS** heirs and considered in his lineage. Jesus was born under Jewish law. By Jewish law, the children born to Mary would be Joseph's children, therefore the lineage is traced through Joseph. Mary's lineage is not mentioned in the Bible because it was the man, Joseph's, lineage that mattered.

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THANK YOU

During the recent down-sizing of staff at AID Atlanta due to a $200,00.00 funding shortfall, my position as chaplain of that agency was put in jeopardy. Funding is not, and never has been the reason for my presence there. It is, simply, the easiest way to reach the greatest number of people infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS with a ministry of presence. In the three year period from 1992 through 1994 AID Atlanta supplemented the First MCC Pastoral Care Fund with $19,950.00 when grant monies ran out. The Metropolitan Atlanta Community Foundation was the major contributor to the Fund with $38,000.00 (approximately two-thirds of the total funding) in grants over that same period. Contrary to a release that was published in "Southern Voice," my position was NOT eliminated. Rather, AID Atlanta asked that I do what I could to secure, with their assistance, outside funding for the chaplain's position.

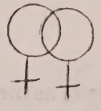
When Julie Howell, a member of Faith United Methodist Church in Smyrna and volunteer in the chaplain program at AID Atlanta heard, she went to work! She called her "prayer partner" to explain the situation. Her prayer partner's husband was leading their prayer meeting that night because Julie's husband, the pastor, has laryngitis. It was suggested that Julie lead the meeting and that they take a "Love Offering" at the service. She did; they did. She delivered to me the results of that meeting of about thirty-five members---a Faith Church check made out to First MCC for $710.00. She also informed me that it was one of the most "spirit--filled" meetings they had ever had and that they had decided to "adopt" me. They have pledged at least $100.00 every month to ensure that this ministry continues. God does work in mysterious ways!!!

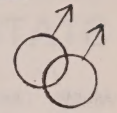
Also rallying to support were Haven House of Midtown and Midtowne Medicine (long-term supporters of the Pastoral Care and Grady TV Funds) making substantial pledges for monthly financial contributions. With little or no effort on my part, commitment covering one-third of the $2,400.00 per month budget was secured by pledge in less than one week. Sister Margaret, my chaplain-partner at AID Atlanta, also received funding to cover her needs for the next two years. Julie is volunteering as part-time administrative assistant to handle much of the paper work and telephoning. The ministry will continue.

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."--Hebrews 11:1 (NRSV)

Together in Christ's Service,
Rev. R.W. (Chip) Carson
Staff Pastor/AIDS Pastoral Care

HOMOSEXUALITY & THE BIBLE WORKSHOP





or

Arming Yourself to Meet the Fundamentalist!

On Sunday, April 9th at 2:00 pm First MCC will again offer the workshop on "Homosexuality and the Bible". This month it will be led by Rev. Emily Bel.

If you have any questions concerning what the Bible really says about being lesbian/gay and being a Christian, or if you have any doubts about whether Jesus loves you, you need to come to the workshop.

If you know that Jesus loves you and you don't have any doubts, but often find yourself at a loss for words when other people question you about the Bible, you need to come to this workshop!

If you have never been to a workshop of this sort, you also need to attend.

Bring your Bible, (or Bibles). We like to have as many different versions as possible. Rev. Emily Bel will lead us through the scriptures.

Be sure to attend on Sunday, April 9th, 1379 Tullie Road in Hose Hall (at the rear of the building).

APRIL MEMBERSHIP BIRTHDAYS

Greg Creech	2	Wayne Turnbow	20
Donald Schoner	3	Jim Christ	22
Dan Hobbs	5	Ed Varian	24
Harry Oder	6	Tina Selvidge	27
John Walker	9	Brian Carlson	29
Daniel Lewis	16	Jonette Barrett	29
John Hall	16	Bobb Johns	30
John Moore	17		

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VITAL STATISTICS

Month 94/95	Member-ship	Total Attendance	Total $ Offering
Jan	189/220	1,241*/1,459	9,699/9593
Feb	196/225	1,210 /1,232	8,979/9973
Mar	198	1,196	8,502
Apr	207	1,160	9,373
May	210	1,225*	9,745
Jun	204	1,040	7,749
Jul	206	1,094*	11,799
Aug	207	1,023	8,989
Sept	205	1,047	9,245
Oct	208	1,281*	9,344
Nov	215	960	7,583
Dec	214	1,139	9,317

* 5 Sunday Month

JUST FOR FUN

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Manifesto of Faith

In 1957, members of the Atlanta clergy responded in faith to the social and moral issues facing their community. Their statement, the *Ministers' Manifesto*, was a call for Atlantans to exercise tolerance, compassion, and understanding as they approached the specific issue of desegregation. Today's issues are much broader and our community much more diverse. But in the tradition of the Atlanta clergy in 1957, we continue in the same hope that people of faith might lead the city in reflections and actions which will bring us to full justice for all persons.

We affirm that all humankind in its magnificent diversity is created by God. We give thanks for the richness and beauty of this tapestry of individuals and cultures, threads separately fragile, but strong when woven together by the loving hand of God. We seek forgiveness for building barriers of fear, greed, bigotry, and power which tear us apart from each other and from our own spiritual selves. We call upon all people of faith to remember that the words we use to describe skin color, religious groups, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, or physical and mental health are descriptive, and not definitive, of who we are. We are, first and last, God's children — God's handiwork. We are called to know each other as members of one human family, and to see that all our sisters and brothers live with justice, dignity and hope. We affirm that we are called to love, rather than judge, each other.

As an interracial group of male and female clergy and laity from several faiths, we seek to challenge individuals and institutions to examine both private, interpersonal relationships, and public, societal structures so that the cause of justice is furthered. The very diversity that God has created often seems to be the cause of tension, hostility, exploitation and violence. Racism, for example, continues to be a basic determinant of all life factors, from schools and jobs, to housing, healthcare, and criminal justice. Rich and poor are divided as poverty and homelessness continue to undermine the attempts of thousands of our citizens to participate in the promise of the fullness of life. Gay and lesbian members of our community struggle for basic acceptance. Both individual dignity and public life are under attack. Materialism and the preservation of power have become idolatrous. Violence of all kinds is epidemic, and there is little sense of community. In faith, we must respond.

In our response, God is calling us to be partners in the shaping of the Beloved Community. Tending to the needs of all the people, this community rejects all idols, and embraces caring and concern as the source of justice and security. In the hope of the Beloved Community, we share the affirmation that God crated all humankind with equal dignity. We share the confession that our religious institutions themselves reflect the separation and injustice which we condemn in society. We share the hope which is ours because we know that hearts and minds, as well as organizations and structures, are subject to change through the power of the Creator God in whose name we act and in whose spirit we examine the following areas of common life:

WE AFFIRM the integrity of religious diversity and acknowledge the reality of a Creator God who both transcends and includes this diversity. We confess that humankind has often used religion to separate and oppress by failing to speak and to act with justice. We therefore call upon the faith community to practice tolerance and respect of religious differences, and to seek justice for all persons.

WE AFFIRM that God created one human family, diverse in color, culture, and kind. We confess that through the evils of racism, one group of people claims superiority over all other groups, and then exploits those other groups. The system of race was not developed as a way to describe the family of humanity, but rather as a way to limit who has access to power and economic privilege. In the United States, these dynamics of racism are particularly apparent in the relationships between those who call themselves "white" and those of African origin.

To begin this task, we call upon people who claim the name "white" to acknowledge the dynamics of racism, including its derivative benefits, powers, opportunities, and privileges, and to confess their continuing oppression of other people through systems that perpetuate racism.

We further call upon all other peoples of colors to continue to assert their own identity and purpose independent from racist structures.

We finally call upon faith communities to commit to study and understand the system of racism, and to build a new order based not on the system of race, but rather on the dignity of each individual and on the gifts that each cultural heritage has to share with the human family.

WE AFFIRM the equality and worth of all persons regardless of gender. Nevertheless, we live in a culture where gender discrimination and sexual harassment continue to plague women in the work place, and where sexual violence is rampant in our streets and in our homes. In addition, our systems of recourse frequently blame women for their own exploitation and victimization.

We call upon communities of faith to recognize the relationship between our tolerance of sexism and the abusive treatment of women; to work diligently to change the male biases of our culture, including political and legal systems; and to support actively the equitable sharing of power and opportunity so that all persons might live in wholeness and without fear.

WE AFFIRM that all people, regardless of sexual orientation, are created in the image of God. People in the minority of sexual orientation cross all the barriers humankind establishes. They are of all ethnic backgrounds. They are of both genders. They are found in every economic class, in every nation, city, and village, in every profession, and within every level of physical and mental ability. Yet, in many instances, they must hide their sexual identity or risk rejection by their religious communities. Their acceptance is a test of the faith community's respect for the diversity God has created.

We confess that, for far too long, many religious institutions have said, "We don't know these people. We don't want to know them. We don't want them in our places of worship." This attitude reinforces the evil of homophobia, and contributes to crimes of violence against lesbians and gays. We call upon people of faith to dialogue with sisters and brothers of Atlanta's gay and lesbian communities, with reconciling faith communities, and with the city-wide gay and lesbian community, and to lead the way in knowing, respecting, and combating discrimination against this rainbow of God's people.

WE AFFIRM that mental illness is a treatable disease and that mentally ill persons must be accorded the opportunity to be productive members of the community.

We confess that our willingness to close large, state institutions for the mentally ill has not been followed by a willingness to welcome mentally ill persons into our own communities.

We call upon faith communities to help stop the use of stigmatizing language for the mentally ill; to refrain from blaming mentally ill persons for their disease; to work against discrimination in housing and employment; and to provide a nurturing, compassionate, supportive environment for mentally ill persons re-entering the community.

WE AFFIRM that degrees of physical ability present unique opportunities for physically challenged persons to exhibit their God-given gifts and talents.

We confess that the most debilitating barrier faced by persons with physical challenges is the unwillingness of others to re-order buildings, structures, and thinking to maximize these gifts and talents.

We call upon faith communities to be sensitive to the needs and aspirations of physically challenged persons; to encourage language that both affirms and celebrates diversity of physical gifts and abilities; and to insure the congregational and civic participation of physically challenged persons to the full extent of their God-given abilities.

WE AFFIRM, as a religious community of different faith traditions, that the earth and its fruits are a common gift entrusted to all people together by the source of all life.

We believe that all people on earth have an equal right to the use of the earth's resources sufficient to maintain life, health, and full human development. We confess that we have abused the gift of creation through greed, hoarding, wasting, polluting, and otherwise supporting an economic system that teaches us to want what we do not really need. Many of us have a standard of living which forces others into poverty.

We call upon faith communities to re-affirm that the creation is for all people, to acknowledge our worldwide economic interconnectedness, to recognize that our avarice often pushes us beyond the fragile boundaries of creation, and to resist being defined primarily as consumers.

WE AFFIRM that as all people are children of God, we cannot tolerate any discrimination based on ethnic or national origins. We confess that through the evils of ethnic prejudice we have been inhospitable to many immigrant groups seeking to make this country and this city their home. Further, we have blamed certain groups for the ills of the whole of our society and have erected social, economic, and political barriers against specified ethnic groups.

We call upon the faith community to lead society by being hospitable and accepting of all peoples regardless of ethnic or national origin.

We further urge that immigration laws be just and fair to all ethnic groups. And, finally, that all prejudices, as well as all economic, social, and political barriers, be both condemned and removed.

IN CONCLUSION, we call on the Creator God to give us the courage to work for justice and to widen our experience so that we can enjoy the marvel and miracle of creation manifest in each of our sisters and brothers. We affirm God's power to transcend our limited understandings and humble efforts. In thanksgiving, we acknowledge God's ability to work through each individual in this day, in this city, and throughout the world to bring us closer to the "Beloved Community."

B.A.S.I.C.

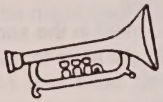
Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Official Monthly Publication of
First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta

"Sharing God's Love -- Serving Christ By Serving Others"

VOLUME XXIII NUMBER 8 August 1995

READ THIS IF YOU READ ANYTHING IN BASIC!



JUST DO IT!

by Tim Tyson

I am so excited! We are finally in our new sanctuary with fabulous acoustics! We have the beginnings of a new sound system that is now in stereo! Put the two together, add a heaping tablespoon of musicians who love God and we have the makings of dynamic worship!!! I will not soon forget the Dedication Service. Everything came together with everyone's tireless work, and the spirit of God moved in our presence.

More great news!! I have been shopping! No, no, this is not great news, this news is "fab-u-lous!" I love shopping. I love spending money. And I know, you are dying to know what all I bought, right? Music!, Music!, lots and lots of Music! Fabulous music. Music that will just tear your heart out, and just when you think you can't take anymore beauty, explore your soul. Yes, music to die for!

But I went out on a limb. I went way out on this limb! In fact, I'm afraid the limb might break. But I decided to have faith and go dancing out on this limb. All of the music that the choir has been doing (and doing so well, might I add) has been in two parts. We have worked in two parts because we don't have enough female voices to do four parts and have a balanced sound. Well, all of the music that I purchased is in four parts, not two. The time to grow is upon us-- time for spiritual and musical growth!

So, what does this mean? Tim has gone mad? He has been taken with a fever? He is the village idiot? No, well...It means that we are going to have lots of women join the choir this season (and men too). Yes, I know this to be true. If you are female, you need to talk to God right now, and I mean this red hot minute! Because, no matter what your skill level, we **need** you in choir. This is not just something we want, this is a full-fledged **need**. I know that for many of you this is the unthinkable, but, trust me, and talk to God about this, *and be willing to do whatever God says.*

Are you interested in being a part of the Christmas Music? If so, this is the time to join with the choir. As this new 1996 Choir Season begins, we will be working to build music skills that will help us accomplish the musical demands of the Christmas music. You will need these skills if you plan to participate in Christmas music '95.

So all of this is to say, the new 1996 Choir Season begins Saturday, August 26, 1995 at 10:00 am in rehearsal hall -- be there. Don't just *consider* joining the choir this year -- *do it!* We have so much talent in our community. I want to channel these God-given abilities into a focused expression of love, worship, and adoration that can lead our congregation to the grandest expressions of worship that any of us have ever experienced in our Christian walk.

I am not very good at using words to express to you what my vision is for the music ministry of this church. I wish I were. I wish you could get inside my mind and see and hear what is possible -- what is well within our grasp -- what I believe we need to be doing in worship here at First MCC. I believe that if you could behold this vision, you would without a second's hesitation lend all of the support that you possibly could to be worshipping our Savior through this music ministry. I believe that you would be out encouraging all of your friends to do the same. You see, I believe that worshipping God is everything. I want you to be as excited about God as you possibly can be. Have an excitement about God that explodes into "doing worship" through music and in your day to day life. (continued on page 4)

FIRST MCC OF ATLANTA

1379 Tullie Road
Atlanta, GA. 30329
Phone: (404) 325-4143
Office Hours: 9 - 5 Monday - Friday

Sundays:	9:00 am	Celebration of Worship
	10:05 am	Adult Bible Study
	11:00 am	Celebration of Worship
	7:00 pm	Power Hour
	7:30 pm	Sunday Evening Worship
Wednesday:	7:30 pm	Midweek Worship

Board of Directors

B	Erin Wertenberger	Vice Moderator
O	Jim Hinkley	Treasurer
A	Kaye Turner	Clerk
R	Carol Harris	Member
D	Tom Larson	Member

Ministerial Staff

M	Rev. Reid L. Christensen	Senior Pastor
I	Rev. Emily A. Bel	Associate Pastor
N	Rev. Chip Carson	Staff Pastor
I	Rev. Douglas Johnson	Staff Pastor
S	Rev. Leevahn Smith	Outreach Ministries
T	Rev. Ray Brown	Christian Education
E	J.R. Finney II	Deacon
R	Liz Pope	Deacon
I	Randy Starnes	Deacon
A	**Clergy Colleague**	
L	Rev. Rebecca Leckrone	
	Rev. Wayne Price	

Music Staff

Dr. Tim Tyson	Director of Music
Kay Hale	Accompanist
Victor Host	Accompanist

Office Staff

Beverly Madding	Administrative Assistant

Cell Group Leaders

Joe Griffin	"Children of Majesty"	325-0556
Beverly Madding	"WhoSoEvers"	325-4143
Liz Pope	(Douglasville)	947-9645
Libby Rice	(Macon)	(912) 988-8443
Bob Scoven	"Phoenix Rising"	455-0563
Jamie Strickland	"New Hope for Cobb"	319-7151
Kaye Turner	"Southside Cell"	361-1216
Erin Wertenberger	"Rainbow Shoes"	607-7448

Christianity helps us face the music, even when we don't like the tune.

Pastor's Pen..

What a celebration!!

Our Dedication Service on July 23 was something else! For me, it was the most moving worship celebration I had ever experienced. The music was beyond my wildest dreams, the parade of Elders and District Coordinators impressive, the message by Rev. Elder Troy Perry inspiring, the lighting and sound superb, even the bulletin looked good! Attendance was excellent. It all combined to overshadow the oppressive heat.

About two years ago we changed our bulletins from reading "worship service" to "worship celebration". It was the intent to change the format steadily toward a resounding celebration of God's goodness and blessing from a quiet, somber service. We have effectively been mixing the two. On July 23, however, **we were celebrating!** And, it's just the beginning.

As we continue to meet in the sanctuary we will continue to improve it. We still have to address the air conditioning/heating problem, build and carpet the platform, secure additional seats, and purchase new altar furniture. But, we will continue to celebrate with each new addition. Other concerns are sealing and painting the outside of the building, new steps at the exits, and continuing to upgrade the current sound system (much of which is borrowed). Then, we will begin to think about building upgrades suggested by the architect (awnings, a new sign, the tower, and stained glass windows) and finishing the second floor. It's exciting and sometimes overwhelming.

The Board of Directors will be setting a priority list for completing the rest of the work and proceeding as fast as money is available. No additional money has been borrowed to renovate the building at this point and monthly mortgage payments are being met.

If you have not worshipped with us in the new sanctuary space, make it a point to do so. God is doing wonderful things in our midst and we want to share them.

Come, celebrate with us!

With love, Reid

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Years wrinkle the skin, but lack of enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.

DEACON BEACON

by Randy Starnes

Learning how to "let go and let God," is a common struggle, especially to new Christians. Confessing our sins, but always reminding God what they were, "Lord I used to do such and such, so how could I be worthy?" Professing to trust in God, but refusing to relinquish control, "Lord I know I should tithe, but my bills are due." We keep regretting the past and fearing the future. A mature Christian will hear God speaking. "My name is 'I Am.' When you live in the past with its mistakes and regrets, it is hard. I am not there. My name is not 'I Was.' When you live in the future, with its problems and fears, it is hard. I am not there. My name is not 'I Will Be.' When you live in this moment it is not hard. I am here. My name is 'I Am.'" A prayer goes out for every friend and member of the First MCC family that we all learn to let go and let God's will be made manifest in our lives and in the life of our Church.

Too Busy to Pray?

Forgive me, Lord, that I allow
My days and hours to be
So filled with trifling tasks, that oft
I find no time for thee.

My thoughts too oft are occupied
With countless earthly things,
When thou wouldst have them mount on high
By faith with eagle wings.

Too busy; O forgive, dear Lord,
That I should ever be
Too much engrossed in worldly tasks
To spend an hour with thee.

—A. B. Christiansen

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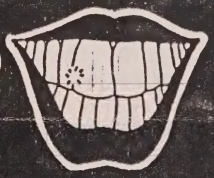
Phillida Hutcheson
Darrell Johnson
Lisa Johnson
John Manter
Rhonda Robinson
Lauren Soldwisch
Julian Thomas

We Want You To Have A Beautiful Smile



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You are never without a Friend when you know God.

(Continued from page 1)

Our senior pastor, Reid, has for the last several weeks been imploring us all to take action for God, to serve this Savior of Love, to stop just soaking up and start sharing, giving, loving everyone. As the words to our benediction say "Share God's love: a smile, a helping hand, a heart to share the burden -- love without prejudice, love without fear!" I echo that call to action. I pound the pulpit and raise my voice like Troy Perry and say: I want you, yes **you**, to do the following things (don't just read them, do them):

1. Sincerely ask God how you can use your gifts at First MCC to serve, to give, and to share for our Savior.

2. Specifically ask God if you should be a part of our music ministry -- a ministry that not only touches the hearts of all who attend our services, but will transform your walk with God as well.

3. And finally, **do** what God says to you. Yes, do it! Use your gifts to the praise of our God! Do it!! -- even if God's plan for you does not include serving in the music ministry (and there aren't many of you that this is the case, see God and I have been having lots of heart to hearts about this, smiley face!). **Do God's will.** You will be fulfilled, because God made you. God knows what will fulfill your life. Trust God to know. And all of the people who are touched by the ministry of this church will be blessed, because you allowed God to work through you. This is worship -- serving God by doing God's will. Can you tell that this is a tremendous burden I carry for each person that attends our church? Do it!

I look forward to worshipping with you as our new season of worship celebration kicks off to a dynamic start. If I can be of any personal help to you, please do not hesitate to ask. All of the goodness of God to you,

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SET

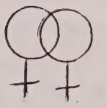
by Beverly Madding

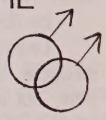
Yes, it's that time of year again. Mark your calendar and plan to attend the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, October 22nd at 2pm.

As a part of the business we will be adopting the 1996 budget and electing three lay delegates and two alternate delegates.

There will be four board positions available, there are three, three - year and one two year positions. Anyone interested in a position on the Board of Directors will need to pick up the Board Candidate packet from the nominating committee: J.R. Finney, John Moore and Kaye Turner. Qualifications and duties are fully explained for you to make a decision about running for these positions.

"HOMOSEXUALITY & THE BIBLE" WORKSHOP





or

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If you have any questions concerning what the Bible really says about being lesbian/gay and being a Christian, or if you have any doubts about whether Jesus loves you, you need to come to the workshop.

If you know that Jesus loves you and you don't have any doubts, but often find yourself at a loss for words when other people question you about the Bible, you need to come to this workshop!

If you have never been to a workshop of this sort, you also need to attend.

Bring your Bible, (or Bibles). We like to have as many different versions as possible. Rev. Chip Carson will lead us through the scriptures. He will be assisted by Rabbi Feyer who will be doing the Old Testaments from the Jewish perspective.

Be sure to attend on Sunday, August 13th, 1379 Tullie Road in Hose Hall (at the rear of the building).

CAROLYN V. JORDAN
ATTORNEY AT LAW

4-E EXECUTIVE PARK, N.E.
SUITE 100
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30329

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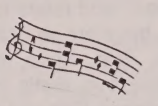
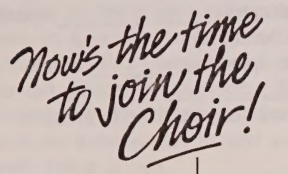
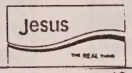
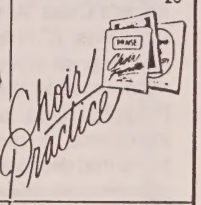
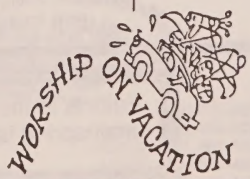
The smile that lights the face will also warm the heart.

Rev. Reid Christensen
Senior Pastor

First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta



AUGUST 1995

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 **7pm** Staff Mtg. **7:30pm** WhoSo-Ever's Cell Mtg **7:30pm** Bible Study	2 **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration*	3 **6:30pm** Altar Guild **7pm** Christian Social Action Ministry Meeting **7pm** Sewing Guild	4 **7pm** New Hope Cell Mtg..	5
6 **9am, 11am & 7:30 pm** *Worship Celebration* **10:05 am** Choir Practice Adult Bible Study **1pm** Audio-Visual Meeting **2pm** Greeters Ministry Mtg. **4pm** Usher Ministry Mtg. **7pm** Prayer Power Hour **8:30 pm** Dessert Night	7 **7pm** AIDS Ministry Mtg. **7:30pm** Children of Majesty Cell Group Mtg. **7:30pm** Douglasville Cell Mtg.	8 **7:30pm** Phoenix Rising Cell Mtg. **7:30pm** Bible Study **8pm** SouthSide Cell Group Mtg.	9 **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration* **8:30pm** VHS Mtg. 	10 **6:30pm** Music Ministry Meeting **7pm** Rainbow Shoes Cell Mtg. **7pm** Special Social Events Ministry Mtg. **7pm** Sewing Guild BASIC deadline	11	12
13 **9am, 11am, & 7:30 pm** *Worship Celebration* **10:05am** Choir Practice Adult Bible Study **2pm** "Homosexuality and the Bible" Workshop **7pm** Prayer Power Hour **7pm** Macon Cell Group Mtg.	14 **7:00 pm** Board Mtg. **7:30pm** Bookstore Meeting	15 **7:30pm** WhoSo-Ever's Cell Mtg. **7:30pm** Bible Study	16 **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration*	17 **7pm** Inquiries Class "A, B, C" **7:30pm** Sewing Guild	18 **7pm** New Hope Cell Mtg.	19 **6pm** Agape Feast
20 **9am, 11am, & 7:30 pm** *Worship Celebration* **10:05am** Choir Practice Adult Bible Study **2pm Council of Ministry** **7pm** Prayer Power Hour	21 **7pm** AIDS Ministry Mtg. **7:30pm** Douglasville Cell Mtg. **7:30 pm** Children of Majesty Cell Group Mtg	22 **7:30pm** Phoenix Rising Cell Mtg. **7:30pm** Bible Study **8pm** SouthSide Cell Group Mtg.	23 **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration*	24 **7pm** Rainbow Shoes Cell Mtg. **7pm** Sewing Guild	25 	26 
27 **9am, 11am, & 7:30 pm** *Worship Celebration* **10:05am** Choir Practice Adult Bible Study **7pm** Prayer Power Hour **7pm** Macon Cell Group Mtg.	28 	29 **7:30pm** Bible Study	30 **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration*	31 **7pm** Sewing Guild	September 1 **7pm** New Hope Cell Mtg.	2
3 **9am, 11am, & 7:30 pm** *Worship Celebration* **10:05am** Choir Practice Adult Bible Study **7pm** Prayer Power Hour **8:30pm** Dessert Night	Labor Day 4 **7pm** AIDS Ministry Mtg. **7:30pm** Douglasville Cell Mtg. **7:30pm** Children of Majesty Cell Group Mtg	5 **7pm** Ministerial Staff Mtg **7:30pm** WhoSo-Ever Cell Mtg. **7:30pm** Bible Study	6 **6pm** Beans & Rice Supper **6:25pm** Choir **7:30pm** *Worship Celebration*	7 **6:30pm** Altar Guild **7pm**Christian Social Action Ministry Meeting **7pm** Sewing Guild	8 	9

Coming in September: 6th Beans and Rice Supper

AGAPE FEAST

The Agape is an ancient meal. It is often called "a love feast" and refers to the name of the meal agape. In Greek, there are several words for love. Among them are Caritas, Eros, Philia, Agape. These are respectably : charitable love, erotic love, brotherly/sisterly love and the love between God and us or unselfish love. In an Agape feast the diners are to be waited upon and their every need at the meal is to be catered by the people waiting the table, the Deacons. In early church the role of Deacon was to serve at table and Communion table but also the Agape feast table. This year the Deacons will help service those present. There is no cost for meal, but reservations must be made to assure enough food is prepared. Please call the office to reserve a place.

Come to the Agape prepared to be pampered. The meal has been prepared, come and eat. Communion will also be served in an unique way.

BEANS AND RICE DINNER ANNOUNCED

Looking ahead, please mark your calendars now for Wednesday, September 6th at 6pm, and plan to be with us for next Beans & Rice Dinner in support of our orphans in the Dominican Republic. Ray Barreras will be delivering the message that night. Cost for the dinner is $5 per person with all proceeds going toward the orphan fund.

INQUIRER'S CLASSES

Classes will be offered Thursday, August 17 at 7:00 pm in Hose Hall. Each class lasts about 45 minutes. Inquirer's Class "A" will be at 7:00 pm, with Class "B" at 7:45 and Class "C" to follow at 8:30 pm.

Anyone interested in finding out more about MCC is encouraged to attend. Classes cover the areas of Beliefs, Responsibilities, and the history of First MCC. Although attendance is required for membership, one need not make that decision prior to taking the class.

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Faith is to the soul what a mainspring is to a watch.

Bible Quiz

JESUS PRAYED

World Day of Prayer and other such occasions remind us of the great importance of prayer to Christian living. Jesus prayed often in the Gospels. Can you identify details from the times that he did so as noted below?

1. When he was _____ by John.
2. All night, before choosing the _____ apostle.
3. At the _____ of the 5,000.
4. When he taught the disciples the "_____ Prayer".
5. Before the raising of _____.
6. At the "Last _____" with his disciples in an upper room.
7. In the garden of _____.
8. On the _____ of Calvary.
9. At _____, while eating with Cleopas and another disciple.

Answers

1. baptized, Luke 3:21
2. twelve, Luke 6:12-13
3. feeding, John 6:10-11
4. Lord's, Luke 11:1-4
5. Lazarus, John 11:41-42
6.. Supper, Matthew 26:26-27
7. Gethsemane, Matthew 26:36,39,42,44
8. cross, Luke 23:33-34
9. Emmaus, Luke 24:13-30

Bible Smarts...

JUDE

The Book of Jude is similar to 2 Peter as it warns of the present-day false teachers and heretics: "Woe to them! For they walk in the way of Cain, and abandon themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error, and perish in Korah's rebellion" (1:11). "These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own passions, loud-mouthed boasters, flattering people to gain advantage" (1:16). "It is these who set up divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit" (1:19).

Jude closes his letter with one of the most beautiful benedictions in the Bible: "Now to the one who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of Christ glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and for ever. Amen" (1:24-25).

OPPORTUNIES TO GIVE

Telephone Extension for Music Director	$250.00
Fax Modem	$100.00
Sheet Music for Choir	$100.00
Tapes for Choir	$100.00
Yard Rake	$ 10.00
Wheel Barrow	$ 30.00

UFMCC GENERAL CONFERENCE, SEVENTEEN

by John Hall

I am especially inspired to share with you our joy that Atlanta was selected to host the 17th Biennial Conference of the Fellowship of MCC. Not since 1973, when this fledgling denomination met in conference at the Decatur Theater on the square in Decatur have we had the opportunity to experience locally our denomination in action for Christ in most dynamic ways. Characterized by unusual (for us), peace and harmony, the work of this conference moved forward efficiently and with a sense of purpose we have not experienced in past years. Praise God we have finally come of age.

It moved our hearts and spirits with the way we reached out to all God's people - Gays, Lesbians, People of Color, Transsexuals, Transgendered, the Young, the Elderly, those ill with AIDS and other catastrophic illnesses, and more especially the heterosexuals among us. For the first time we honored those heterosexuals who have served almost since the founding of the Fellowship. Among those who received awards for their service and faithfulness were Rev. June Norris, who was an early Senior Pastor in Raleigh, and our very own Beverly Madding. Beverly was praised for her role in preparing for General Conference and the day-to-day support until everything was packed up and removed from the hotel at the conclusion of the conference. God Bless you, Beverly, for your faithfulness and all you do for our Church. God Bless and our thanks to all those from First MCC who also helped with generous donations of their time and talents.

The business sessions of the conference were characterized by efficiency and dispatch of the business at hand. There were no floor fights and for the most part peace and harmony reigned. The Elders whose terms were expiring were re-elected, which is an increasing sign of stability and accord in our Church.

Considerable time was devoted to the process of changing the Name of the Clergy Credentials and Concerns Committee to the Board of Ordained Ministry to better reflect our responsibility to the Clergy. There is a great need to support and nourish our Clergy so that they might go about God's work in peace and dignity in a position characterized by long hours and low pay. Needed is a discouragement of the proliferation of Lay Pastors who have no interest in becoming credentialed or ordained. This decreases opportunities for our Student Clergy and causes much discouragement.

Reverend Elder Troy Perry has initiated a campaign to raise funds for the purchase of a Fellowship Headquarters building in Los Angeles. All major denominations of any size have world headquarters buildings or complexes. The Los Angeles Mother Church will share this facility and bear their portion of the costs involved. It is universally believed that this proposal is worthy of our support.

Our denomination has sprouted an ever increasing deluge of authors who have written books of wide interest on a variety of pertinent subjects dealing with daily living challenges of the Children of God. Watch for the appearance of these publications in our book store in the near future.

These are the highlights of the conference seen through the eyes of your Alternate Lay Delegate. Seated after the departure of Delegate J.R. Finney for the funeral of his father. We extend heartfelt sympathy to J.R., it was my honor and privilege to represent our Church. Thanks, and Praise God for this opportunity to serve.

The 1997 General Conference Eighteen will be held in Sydney, Australia in July.

AUGUST MEMBERSHIP BIRTHDAYS

Albert Cardona	1	Bill Jaynes	17
Larry McCoy	2	Kelly Watson	17
Tom Crouch	2	Ray Brown	18
Patricia Brinegar	5	Eddie DeLima	19
Tim Hill	6	Darryl Gravett	22
Julian Thomas	6	Beverly Madding	22
Reid Christensen	8	Wayne Snipes	22
Gary McKinzie	8	David Lowe	25
Ken Wade	11	Jack Smith	25
Tim Campbell	12	Donald Mathieu	25
Kenn Johnson	13	Randy Walters	28
Leevahn Smith	14	Nancy Anderson	28
Billy Hill	15	Carolyn Karrh	30
Molly Thomas	16	Alan Harrell	31
Kellie Blake	17	John Jackson	31

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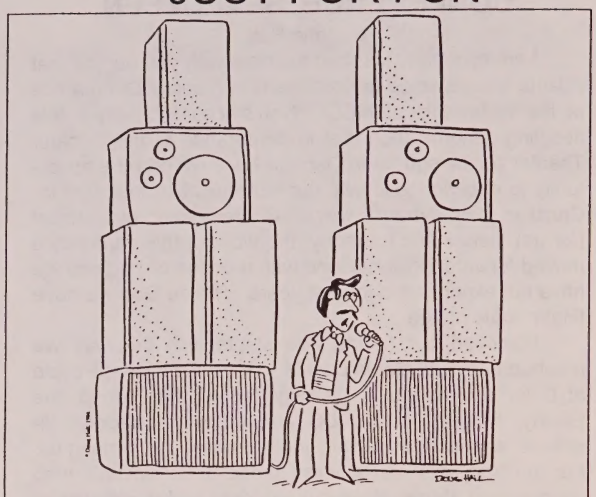
VITAL STATISTICS

Many people go to church; fewer go to worship.

Month 94/95	Member-ship	Total Attendance	General Fund $
Jan	189/220	1,241*/1,459*	9,699/9,593
Feb	196/225	1,210 /1,232	8,979/9,973
Mar	198/234	1,196/1,442	8,502/9,236
Apr	207/247	1,160/1,811*	9,373/12,890
May	210/254	1,225*/1,174	9,745/8,729
Jun	204/253	1,040 / 1,058	7,749/7,982
Jul	206/260	1,094*/ 1,542	11,799/10,575
Aug	207	1,023	8,989
Sept	205	1,047	9,245
Oct	208	1,281*	9,344
Nov	215	960	7,583
Dec	214	1,139	9,317

* 5 Sunday Month

JUST FOR FUN



"I want to request prayer for my brother in the music ministry, Billy Lee Sanders, who was injured in a speaker avalanche last week."

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Atlanta, Georgia 30329

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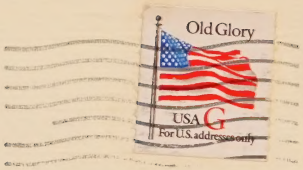
Atlanta, Georgia
Permit #3195

Shirley Lambert
Ragona, Marge
911 G Valley Ave.
Birmingham, AL 35210

1379 Tullie Rd.
Atlanta, GA 30329



Rev. Marge Ragona
% Covenant MCC
P.O. Box 101473
Birmingham, AL 35210

First
Metropolitan Community Church
of Atlanta

July 10, 1995

Rev. Marge Ragona
% Covenant MCC
P.O. Box 101473
Birmingham, AL 35210

Dear Marge,

You are invited to join our congregation for a very special event in the life of this 23 year old church.

On the opening day of the General Conference in Atlanta, July 23, we will be dedicating our building at the 11:00 am worship celebration with several of the elders and district coordinators participating. Troy Perry will bring the morning message.

Your presence would mean a lot to our church, especially to me, personally. If you do not have other commitments within your own church or General Conference, please make an effort to join us.

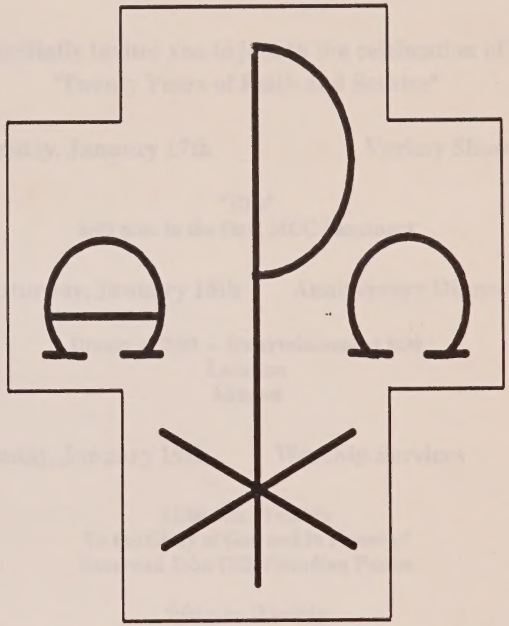
I look forward to praising God together.

Faithfully yours,

Reid L. Christensen

Reid L. Christensen
Senior Pastor

1379 TULLIE ROAD - ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30329 - TELEPHONE (404) 325-4143



Host Committee

Reverend Reid Christiansen
Michael Brooks
Bill Leopard
Reverend Marge Ragona
Richard George

Entertainment

The Congregation of
First Metropolitan Community Church
of Atlanta

cordially invites you to join in the celebration of
"Twenty Years of Faith and Service"

Friday, January 17th — **Variety Show**

"Title"
8:00 p.m. in the First MCC Sanctuary

Saturday, January 18th — **Anniversary Dinner**

Dinner at 7:00 – Entertainment at 8:30
Location
Address

Sunday, January 19th — **Worship Services**

11:00 a.m. Worship
To the Glory of God and in Honor of
Reverend John Gill, Founding Pastor

7:00 p.m. Worship
? ? ?

R.S.V.P for Dinner by Janaury 4, 1992

Anniversary Dinner Response Care

List names of those attending:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Indicate any special diet needs:

_____

Tickets are ? ? ? per Person

Total amount enclosed: $ _____ Telephone: _____

Please enclose check payable to First MCC Atlanta and return in reply envelope by January 4, 1992.

I would like to be a sponsor of
"Twenty Years of Faith and Service"

Archangel – $50 Angel – $25 Saint – $10

Please print name as you wish it to appear in program:

_____
NAME / ORGANIZATION / BUSINESS

_____
CITY / STATE / ZIP

_____
TELEPHONE NUMBER

_____ I wish to remain anonymous.

Please enclose check payable to First MCC of Atlanta.

Group Picture Request

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Telephone: _____

Cost per picture: $10.00 in advance

$12.00 night of Dinner

Amount enclosed: $ _____

Please make check payable to First MCC of Atlanta.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE BUSINESS MEETING - April 27, 1991 - ATLANTA, GEORGIA

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA- Agenda was amended to include election of District Lay Representative for FFO.

ACTION: Fall District Conference meeting minutes were approved.
ACTION: February District Committee minutes and actions were approved.
ACTION: April 26, 1991 District Committee minutes were approved after amendment on Action 3, stating that all District Committee Minutes and materials be sent to all Pastors, Lay and Clergy.
ACTION: Treasurer's report was approved.
ACTION: Approval of District Coordinator's report.
ACTION: DCRC Report by Lynn Guerra. Recommended for Licensing are: Rod Bragg, Frank Beard, Felicia Fontain. Recommended for re-licensing: Rev. Vickie Mitchusson, Rev. Lou Broyles, and Rev. Emily Bell. Recommended for re-entry: Jay Neely.
ACTION: Report of Department of People of Color presented by Darryl Walker. Steering Committee formed. Committee members are Darryl Walker (All Saints), Larry Nunnley (Nashville), Mary Jones (First MCC), Derrick Singletary (St. John's), Vivian Gillian (Mobile), Lee Vahn Smith (First MCC), Richard Epson-Nelms (St. Mary's), and J.R. Finnley (First MCC). Dale Delgato is Alternate DPOC Rep.There are no proposals at this time.
ACTION: Motion at the request of First MCC for moral support in seeking redress of Rev. Marge Ragona to return to active status. Passed unanimously.
ACTION: In connection to the previous action, DCRD proposed to GLAD the following change in the clergy manual, Chapter 10, Definition of status, page 61, insert "individual will be sent a letter of concern, stating the concern and require a response within 60 days. If there is no response within the time frame..."
ACTION: Elder Nominating Committee: Lay nominations were Keith Mason, Jon Mark Jackson and James Tellent. Keith Mason was elected. Clergy Rep by acclamation was Tam Schult. Both Houses affirmed the representatives.
ACTION: Election of FFO Lay Rep. Nominations were: Ray Barrarus, Dayna Foster (by letter), James Tellent (declined), and Jon Mark Jackson. Jon Mark was elected.
ACTION: Nominations for Elder: Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, Rev. Jim Brock, Rev. John Barboni, Rev. Elder Charlie Arehart. All four passed.
ACTION: Approval of Conference Site for Spring 1992: Jackson, Mississippi offered their city and was approved.
ACTION: Discussed Conference Sites for Fall 1992 and Spring 1993. Augusta, Georgia offered for Spring 1993. Birmingham, Knoxville, Raleigh and Huntsville are being considered as possibilities for Fall 1992.
ACTION: Moved and passed that GLAD Request that the General Council mail all pertinent materials, including General Council Minutes, to all Pastors, both clergy and lay.
ACTION: Discussed possibility of moving 1993 General Conference Site. Motion made and approved that if the 1993 General Conference site be moved, we propose it to be moved to Atlanta, Georgia.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Lindenbaum, District Clerk

MEMORANDUM

TO: All GLAD Churches

FROM: District Clerk

RE: Minutes

DATE: September 4, 1991

Enclosed are additional copies of minutes from the April 27, 1991 District Conference Business Meeting as well as the District Committee Committee Meeting Minutes of August 3, 1991.

Please keep these safe as you will need them for the Fall Business Meeting on Saturday, November 2, 1991, in Chattanooga, Tennessee. See you there!

Sincerely,

Sharon Lindenbaum

GLAD District Clerk

Gulf Lower Atlantic District

of the ***Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches***

October 2, 1991

Dear Clergy & Lay Delegate:

Enclosed is your pre-conference packet:

1. Conference Schedule
2. Workshop Information
3. Business Agenda
4. Minutes District Committee Meeting Aug. '91
5. Minutes District Conference Business Meeting Apr. '91
6. District Coordinator's Report

(The **TREASURER'S REPORT & THE 1992 BUDGET** has been mailed separately by Dennis Luft.)

PLEASE BRING THESE MATERIALS WITH YOU TO CONFERENCE.

There will be additional materials when you register at the Comfort Hotel Rivercentre in Chattanooga. Also, there will be a revised schedule with meeting room assignments.

There is a Postcard enclosed, please note that you have received these materials, and return the card. Please cross check with clergy and lay delegates to assure that all have received this mailing.

Note that there is time provided for the delegates to caucus if this is necessary. We will be electing several District officers and representatives. In regard to the representative for the **WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT**, this newly created program of the Fellowship will be focusing on issues of particular concern to the women's community. At this juncture, the representative will **not** be expected to travel. This person will be in contact with the Steering Committee appointed by the Board of Elders to coordinate efforts with women in our District, and to communicate GLAD interests to the Steering Committee.

We are looking forward to another wonderful opportunity of Worship and Family. Nathan Monnel, of Knoxville MCC, is our Music Director and has planned another inspirational program of music which will be featured throughout the conference. And, of course, our featured speaker, Evangelist Rev. Delores Berry, also brings praise in her inimitable singing-style. We look forward to your participation. She has prepared some special music with members of St. John's MCC, Raleigh and St. Mary's MCC, Greensboro.

MCC Chattanooga has been working overtime to prepare for our visit to that city. Their new Pastor, Rev. Polly Ireland, and the entire congregation are eager to welcome you. This is to be a time of renewal and recommitment. A time for sharing, caring and loving. Have a safe trip, and God Bless everyone.

Jay Neely, District Coordinator ≡ Post Office Box 8356 ≡ Atlanta, Georgia 30306 ≡ 404/872-2246

GULF LOWER ATLANTIC DISTRICT
CONFERENCE XIII

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 2, 1991 CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

INVOCATION Rev. Victoria Mitchussen

CALL OF THE ROLL: Lay Delegates and Clergy
District Committee
Acknowledgement of Observers

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

1. APPROVAL OF THE SPRING DISTRICT CONFERENCE MINUTES

2. REPORT OF THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE ACTIONS

   A. August 3, 1991 meeting - Atlanta
   B. November 1, 1991 meeting - Chattanooga

3. TREASURER'S REPORT (Mailed separately to Delegates & Clergy)

4. DISTRICT COORDINATOR'S REPORT

5. OTHER DISTRICT REPORTS

6. PROGRAM REPORTS

7. NEW BUSINESS

   A. ELECTIONS

      1. Asst. District Coordinator
      2. Lay Representative
      3. DPOC Representative
      4. Women's Secretariat Representative

   B. Approval of the 1992 Budget

   C. Approval of conference site for Fall 1992 & Spring 1993

   D. Recommendations for Fall 1993 & Spring 1994.

CLOSING PRAYER Mr. Michael Dunn

DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MEETING OF AUGUST 3, 1991

Committee Members Present: Rev. Jay Neely, Rev. Janet Pierce, Rev. Reid Christensen, Dennis Luft, and Cassi Wylie.

Committee Members Absent (excused): Sharon Lindenbaum.

Rev. Pierce opened the meeting with prayer at 9:05 a.m.

In the abscence of the Clerk, Dennis Luft volunteered to act as Clerk for this meeting.

REPORTS:

A. The committee received a verbal report from the District Coordinator.

B. The Treasurer's report as of June 30, 1991 was reviewed by the committee.

ACTION: Approved the roll-over of $5,000 certificate of deposit and directed the Treasurer to increase the amount of the certificate at his discretion. (Unanimous)

ACTION: Directed the Treasurer to charge the Jackson Ministry of Reconciliation expenses to a separate non-budget item rather than to the budget line item "Church Assistance." (Unanimous)

1) Commissioned Church and New Work Reviews:

ACTION: Approved the continuation of commissioned church status for the following churches from whom review packets were received:

M.C.C. Augusta (Reviewer - Wylie)
M.C.C. Chattanooga (Reviewer - Neely, Lindenbaum)
M.C.C. of the Tri-Cities (Reviewer - Neely, Lindenbaum)
M.C.C. Greenville (Reviewer - Christensen)
Covenant M.C.C. (Reviewer - Christensen)
M.C.C. Jackson (Reviewer - Neely)
New Life M.C.C. (Reviewer - Neely)

(Unanimous)

The Clerk will notify the above churches of continuation of commissioned church status. In addition, the committee member responsible for the detailed review of each of the above churches will write the church with specific comments regarding each review.

ACTION: Delayed action until November District Committee meeting on the continuation of commissioned church status for M.C.C. Mobile (Reviewer - Wylie) and M.C.C. Montgomery (Reviewer - Pierce) from whom no review packets were received. The Clerk will notify each church that the Committee expects the packets within 60 days from notification and the reviewer will telephone to offer assistance. (Unanimous)

ACTION: Tabled to the November District Committee meeting the discussion regarding an amendment to the District Church Status and Standards for a church status to describe a church that no longer meets commissioned church status but is not a new work. (Unanimous)

ACTION: Received the review packet for M.C.C. Hickory (Reviewer - Pierce) with commendation for progress toward commissioned status. The reviewer will correspond with detailed comments on the review packet. (Unanimous)

ACTION: Waived the requirement for a review packet for M.C.C. Gulfcoast. (Unanimous)

2) ACTION: Approved the charter church application for M.C.C. Charleston with by-laws corrections. District Coordinator to notify and advise concerning by-laws corrections. (Unanimous)

ACTION: Approved Mary M. Moore to be the pastor of M.C.C. Charleston. Rationale: The District Church Status and Standards require the District Committee to approve the exception for a lay pastor of a chartered church. (4 for - 1 against)

ACTION: The District Committee will request C.C.C.C. to examine the possibility of a policy granting certain exceptions for clergy licensing requirements for lay pastors who have pastored within U.F.M.C.C. for 5 or more years. Rationale: Certain exceptions are granted currently for transfer clergy who have pastored in other denominations for 5 or more years. Thus, we are not affording our own lay pastors the same exceptions currently granted transfer clergy. Rev. Pierce will draft letter. (Unanimous)

3) ACTION: Tabled until the February, 1992 District Committee meeting final action on the review of M.C.C. Nashville pending updated financial information for the year 1991 and financial status as of December 31, 1991. (Unanimous)

4) The committee received a report on the results of the Ministry of Reconciliation at M.C.C. Jackson from Rev. Pierce and an update on the current status of the church from Rev. Neely.

ACTION: Delayed request to approve the appointment of Jim Dorman as deacon pending receipt of documentation of training completed. (Unanimous)

5) ACTION: The Committee will advise M.C.C. Augusta that the church is in violation of U.F.M.C.C. by-laws as a result of electing its lay delegate for a 3-year term of office. The Committee will advise the church that the U.F.M.C.C. by-laws state that the lay delegate "should" be elected after General Conference rather than "must" be elected after General Conference. (Unanimous)

6) The District Committee was advised by Rev. Neely of the resignation of Rev. Frank Beard from the pastorate at M.C.C. Greenville and received an update on the status of the church.

7) ACTION: Approved the appointment of Rev. Jim Becker as the pastoral leader of M.C.C. Gulfcoast. (4 for - 0 against - 1 abstention)

8) ACTION: Approved payment of $69 to the U.F.M.C.C. Board of Pensions in payment of the pension contributions in arrears for M.C.C. Mobile for the years 1988-1989. This figure was determined by negotiations between Rev. Neely and the Board of Pensions at a meeting held at General Conference. (Unanimous)

9) ACTION: Tabled action on a request for assistance with pastor's moving expenses for M.C.C. Chattanooga pending receipt of information demonstrating need. (Unanimous)

10) ACTION: Denied a request for student clergy financial assistance. (Unanimous)

11) ACTION: Approved reimbursement for expenses for housing, transportation, and per diem expenses for District Coordinator at General Conference, 1991. (Unanimous)

12) Received a report from Rev. Neely on the current status of possible new works in the cities of Memphis, Asheville, Savannah, and Valdosta, and in the state of Mississippi. Also received a report fromm Revs. Pierce and Neely about clergy interviewed at General Conference who had expressed an interest in coming to G.L.A.D.

13) Discussed details of Fall, 1991 District Conference in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

ACTION: Authorized Rev. Neely to negotiate the financial package to be provided by G.L.A.D. to Rev. Delores Berry. (Unanimous)

ACTION: Authorized Cassi Wylie to explore the possilbilty of having Brenda Blizzard at the Fall, 1991 Conference, also, to provide workshop(s), etc. regarding EXCEL. (Unanimous)

ACTION: Directed the Clerk to notify all churches that the Assistant District Coordinator and District Lay Representative positions are due for election at the Fall, 1991 Conference and that anyone wishing to provide a resume' for consideration by the entire district must submit such resume' to the District Coordinator by September 15. (Unanimous)

Discussed future conference sites as follows:

Spring, 1992 - Jackson, MS
(preliminary hotel negotiations underway)

Fall, 1992 - interest expressed by Raleigh, Knoxville and Birmingham

Spring, 1993 - interest expressed by Augusta, Huntsville and Birmingham

The meeting was closed with prayer by Dennis Luft and adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

ADDENDUM: After the meeting it was discovered that the packet from M.C.C. Montgomery had been filed on time but had only been sent to one District Committee member. Action on the status of M.C.C. Montgomery remains delayed to the November meeting.

WEEK 5: BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS

TEXT: Ephesians 3:11-22

The theme of the letter to the Ephesians transports us to a concept which is beyond our wildest imagination. Somehow, Paul, the writer of this letter, perceives God at work bringing all creation into a fundamental unity through the mystery of the Christ. Throughout this letter, Paul repeatedly refers to this mystery. Yet, Paul is not simply spinning new theological categories to confuse the readers of his day and countless readers through the ages. Paul perceived this mystery at work in history, beginning long ago and continuing to completion.

In this section of the letter to the Ephesians, Paul writes about this mystery at work in the great conflict of the early church: the tension between Gentile and Jew. Jewish believers felt that Gentiles must first become Jews in order to really be Christian. Gentiles simply disagreed. It seems like a silly issue today but it was just as serious then as today's issues which split denominations as the ordination of women, inclusion of sexual minorities, or who can really be called a Christian. Paul's response is simple and to the point: none of these categories matter! God through Christ has made the two of you one and has broken down the walls of hostility.

Generation after generation, Christians still don't seem to get it. Through crusades, inquisitions, reformations, accusations, and all sorts of divisive bickering, we often choose to build walls of hostility which Christ came to tear down.

In the face of it all, Paul maintains a simple vision. Paul knows that we are no longer strangers to each other but fellow members of the household of God. We are being built into God's temple to become a dwelling place for the Spirit.

1. What issues from your former church affiliation would have put you at odds with those who are now part of your community of faith in MCC?

2. Are there other issues in your present congregation which are cause for tension? (such as types of music, how communion is celebrated, who does what in the church)

3. How do these categories and divisions limit the experience of God's presence in your life and the life of the congregation?

4. How can you work to be a source of reconciliation in these matters?

First Metropolitan Community Church

celebrates

"Twenty Years of Faith and Service"

to the glory of God and for the Atlanta community

1972 to 1992

Request for Charter in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches from the Metropolitan Community Mission of Atlanta

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, hereby wish that it be known of our Christian desire to commit ourselves to work for and serve Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the needs of our sisters and brothers in this community through our dedicated membership in the Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta.

We therefore respectfully petition the Southeastern District Coordinator, and the Board of Elders of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, to charter our Christian Mission as a full member Church in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, with all the rights, priveleges, duties and obligations that are assumed with the granting of such charter and recognition as a member congregation.

The goals of our Church are to glorify God, witness for Christ, and to serve our fellow man and womankind. This we have done, are doing, and will continue to do through the guidance, love and strength of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In the love of our Saviour
Your brothers and Sisters, in Christ.

John W. Gill	Interim Pastor
David V. Guthrie	Interim Treasurer
Vickey Chalkley	Interim Clerk

Dated: March 19, 1972

John S. Jenkins
David M. Muir
William L. Leopard
Ronald A. Rosenthal
Scott Hawes
John D. (Jay) Henderson
Robert B. Stacey
Adam C. Rackowski
Joseph E. Waits
Charles R. Lawson
G. William Chickering
C. David Miller
Robert T. Giglio
Roy Hemperly
Decatur Mangham
Peter I. Ceijas, III
Michael G. Musard
Tom Tennent

Thomas J. Teaver
Douglas R. Smith
Raymond W. Rosborough, Jr.
Roger E. Paron
Jack D. Anderson
B. Joseph Hackett
John MacArthur Weaver
David S. Bryant
Ronald B. Garrison †
William A. Addy
Joseph D. Bernardo †
Nadine F. Ragsdale
Steve Warren
Neal Causey †
W. Edward Smith, Jr. †
Lisi Elizabeth Adams
James W. Holbrook
Richard C. Wolfe

Quinton T. Hudson
Dale Dague
Jim House
Robert S. Shook
Joseph A. Hickey
Richard Romanski
Lee Wayne Jordan
Danny Parmer
Ben Pirkle
Virginia Wilkin
Billie McClain
Jerry Colompos
Robert F. Hancock
Errol V. Statum †
David Petty †
John Howell †
Ted Bill
Jon Wilson

† indicates now deceased

The History of Our Church

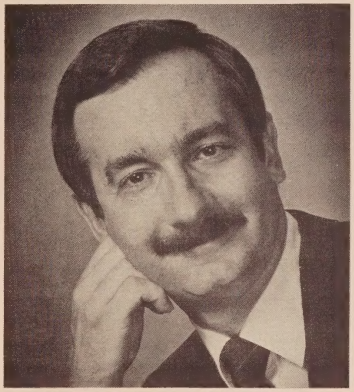
On a bitterly cold Sunday afternoon, January 16, 1972, approximately fifty people gathered at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation on Cliff Valley Way for the first service of the Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta. Even though, historically, this was the first event in the history of our church, the story begins much earlier with the events that led Rev. John Gill, our founding pastor, to come to Atlanta and begin his work here.

John Gill was a native of Pennsylvania having been born in Pittsburgh in 1945. He graduated from Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1967, and then went to Princeton Theological Seminary where he graduated in 1970. John's first, and last, church position before coming to Atlanta was as interim Director of Youth Activities for the Westfield Presbyterian Church in Westfield, New Jersey, the fourth largest Presbyterian church in America.

The turning point in John's life came in April, 1971, when he went to New York to attend the First National Conference on the Christian Church and the Homosexual, an ecumenical gathering because, as John put it, "no one denomination had the guts to sponsor it." When John returned to Westfield, he decided that he would share the facts concerning his own sexuality with the ministers of the church. John said that things happened fast: "I saw the Senior Minister on Monday, the Personnel Committee on Tuesday; on Wednesday I was asked if I could be out of town within ten days!"

Although John had passed his ordination exams within the Presbyterian Church, he had been waiting at the Westfield church for assignment to a permanent post in order to be ordained. Needless to say, after John's "revelation" to the New Jersey church, his dreams of ordination in the Presbyterian church were forever smashed. John returned to New York and got a job as secretary in a rubber factory.

Exactly six months prior to the first service of our church here in Atlanta, another event occurred which would determine John's future. He met the Rev. Troy Perry who was attending the first anniversary celebration of New York's MCC, the Church of the Beloved Disciple. John indicated an interest in becoming a minister in the Universal Fellowship and establishing an MCC mission. Troy indicated that there were two cities where he was particularly interested in starting missions. One of these was Boston; the other was Atlanta because Troy had received a letter from a prison inmate here, Coleman Barnes, requesting the establishment of a Metropolitan Community Church in Atlanta. John chose Atlanta and arrived here Sunday, November 1, 1971.



The Reverend John Gill

John had optimistically set December 3rd for the first worship service of the Atlanta mission, but had to change his plans when no place to hold the service could be found. In order to support himself until the mission could be established, John took a job with Rich's and worked in the bargain basement.

After being turned down by practically every church in the city, John finally found the Unitarian Universalist Congregation willing to rent their facilities for one Sunday only. The fifty dollars they wanted as rental was raised by love offerings taken at the Tampa and Miami Metropolitan Community Churches. With a site for the first service secure, John then had to find a location for subsequent services for the church.

And so, on January 10th, John met with Richard Munroe, the owner of the Pocket Theatre at 535 Courtland Street, who agreed to let John use his facilities for the next four Sundays. At the meeting with Mr. Munroe, John met Tommy Teaver, who agreed to play for the first service at the Unitarian Universalist Church.

And so, on January 16, 1972, the first service was held at the Unitarian Universalist Church with around fifty people in attendance. The Rev. Lee Carlton, pastor of the Tampa church, preached the first sermon. The service was enthusiastically received, and at the coffee hour that followed, many of the church's charter members met each other for the first time.

The following Sunday, January 23rd, the church held its second service at the Pocket Theatre. Richard Munroe, the theatre's owner, attended the service and was so touched by the service that he offered John use of the facility, rent free, until June.

By March 5th, the congregation and its financial standing had reached the point that the congregation voted to offer John the position of full time pastor at $100 per week. He accepted.

The church celebrated its first Easter on April 2, 1972, and two weeks later, on April 16th, our church joined MCC Tampa and MCC Miami as the third chartered church in the Southeastern District. The Rev. Troy Perry and the Rev. Bradley Wilson, pastor of MCC Miami and Southeastern District Coordinator, were in attendance. Rev. Perry preached the sermon and also presented the church with its charter. There were fifty four persons who had signed the original petition, and these were received as charter members of the church. Our first official congregational meeting followed the service and John Gill was unanimously

elected Pastor of the congregation. The congregation also elected the first Board of Directors composed of Vicki Chalkley, Ronnie Garrison, David Guthrie, Joe Hickey and Joe Waits.

Because the Pocket Theatre was used by the owner as a workshop, we were limited in our use of it. Sunday services were held at two o'clock, "rap sessions" where the church's beliefs, aims and goals were vigorously discussed were initiated on Wednesday evenings, and choir rehearsals led by Tommy Teaver, Minister of Music, were held on Friday evenings. Two committees were established, the Social Committee and the Worship Committee. These committees held their meetings in members' homes. Our Sunday attendance at the Pocket Theatre averaged between 130 and 160. We hosted our first District Conference the weekend of May 26-28, 1972.

Because of other commitments for the Pocket Theatre, we had to look for other facilities. The church found that the owners of the Decatur Theatre at 527 North McDonough Street in Decatur were anxious to close that facility as a theatre, and we negotiated a lease for the building with Storey Theatres, Inc. The terms of the lease were $450 per month for the first year and $500 per month for the second year. The congregation raised $1,700 to initiate the lease.

In a successful effort to raise money for the church, the Social Committee inaugurated a program of Sunday night movies at the church. At that time, laws in metropolitan Atlanta strictly prohibited the sale of alcoholic beverages on Sundays, and as a result, no bars in the city were open. Realizing the need for a place for the gay community to gather for fellowship on Sundays, the Social Committee began renting movies to show and received permission from the Board to serve alcoholic beverages and other refreshments. This program was very successful and continued for years, even after our move into the present building. There were those in the church who were opposed to the serving of alcohol in the church, but every time the issue was brought before the congregation, the members voted to continue the practice.

Beginning in May, we added a second worship service that was held Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Attendance was very small at these services, and the following February the Sunday morning services were replaced by Sunday evening services held at 6:30 p.m. preceding the Social Committee movies.

Our church was honored in 1973 by being selected to host the General Conference of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. This was the first time that the General Conference was held outside of Los Angeles. The Conference was held on Labor Day Weekend, September 1-3, 1973, and our church was filled to overflowing.

Also in September, the church formed the Building Committee to begin looking for a new facility for the church to buy. It had become all too apparent that our attendance was being adversely affected by our distance from downtown Atlanta. The Building Committee found that, in general, storefronts were too small, churches and warehouses too expensive for our purposes. It was finally decided that another theatre would be our best approach. The location finally agreed upon was the Hilan Theatre at 800 North Highland Avenue, which was owned by Storey Theatres. Storey asked for $90,000, but accepted $80,000 for the building. The church was unable to get a conventional mortgage because we were the "gay church," but Storey agreed to a private arrangement between our church and them. There were two mortgages signed: one for $50,000 to last ten years with payments of $661.00 per month, the other one for $20,000 to be paid in four "balloon" payments due March 11 of each year ($7,000 in 1975, $6,500 in 1976, $6,000 in 1977 and $5,500 in 1978). The church made a down payment of $10,000.

The church moved into the new facility on March 9, 1974 and held the first worship service there the following day. The new building was dedicated on Easter Sunday, April 14, 1974 by the Rev. Troy Perry who had led a series of Holy Week services beginning the preceding Wednesday.

After moving into our own building, we made several changes in the structure. It was decided to retain the movie screen for use at the Social Committee movies, so several rows of seats were removed from the front of the auditorium and a platform built in front of the stage for worship services.

In May, 1974 it was announced that a member of the church was in line for a generous inheritance and the church would receive an $84,000 endowment payable in August of that year. On the basis of this endowment, the church decided to purchase a pipe organ from the Independent Presbyterian Church in Savannah. The organ was a 39 rank E. M. Skinner built in 1922 by the Skinner firm in Boston with a three manual console that had been added by M. P. Moller, Inc. in 1951 when they had been engaged by the Savannah church to rebuild the organ. A purchase price of $8,500 was agreed upon and the church made a down payment of $3,000 on the instrument. The organ was removed from the Savannah church by about forty members who worked laboriously over two weekends beginning the end of May. The organ was unloaded onto trucks and brought to Atlanta where it was unloaded by a waiting Sunday evening congregation. The tons of parts associated with the organ were stored in the auditorium completely occupying both rows of side seats and almost the back half of the center section of seats in addition to parts stored on the stage and over the refreshment stand in the lobby. Extensive alteration to the building and major construction of floors on either side of the stage commenced almost immediately. After purchasing and moving the organ, the church learned that the promised endowment would not materialize, and a $5,500 loan had to be negotiated with the Trust Company Bank.

The following year, in November, members removed original acoustical tile and art deco light fixtures from the walls of the church to make way for the painting of the murals by Claude Dudley.

By the end of 1975, there developed a strong faction in the church that was opposed to the serving of alcohol in the church at the Social Committee

movies. At a meeting of the congregation, a heated debate on the issue ensued. Rev. Gill, who previously had been in favor of the practice, changed his position and spoke against it. Those in the congregation who had supported the proposition for years were astonished and let their disappointment be known. Feeling the dissension in the meeting, Rev. Gill called for a vote of confidence from the congregation. The motion passed by a very slim margin, but Rev. Gill decided to offer his resignation effective February 1, 1976, following the fourth anniversary of the church in January.

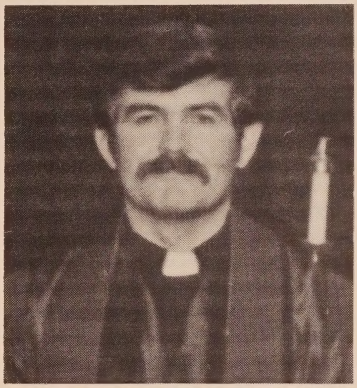
Rev. John Gill's ministry in Atlanta was a very successful one. John's ability as an organizer and his ability to keep accurate records of the church contributed greatly to the successful establishment of MCC Atlanta. In addition, John was an effective preacher and a compassionate counselor. This church owes its very existence to the determination of Rev. John Gill.

After John Gill left, the church was faced with finding a new pastor. The search ended with the Rev. Howard Wells. Rev. Wells was an Honor Graduate of Union Theological Seminary in New York. Howard moved to Atlanta on May 23, 1976 and was installed as pastor of this church on May 30th.

Howard Wells was a highly educated individual and during his term as pastor, a vigorous Christian education program was started at the church. Howard was also a very effective counselor and kept regular office hours at the church.

One of the most outstanding events during Howard's pastorate was a three-day seminar held September 17-19, 1976 at our church. The seminar was entitled "The Church and the Homosexual" and was jointly sponsored with Dignity/Atlanta. The seminar leader was Father John J. McNeill, S.J., who had been one of Howard's teachers at Union Theological Seminary. A Jesuit priest, Father McNeill was a much published writer in addition to being a teacher, scholar and lecturer. The seminar was based on his book, *The Church and the Homosexual*, which had just been published the year of the seminar. The program was a great success and formed a bond between MCC and Dignity/Atlanta.

In addition to the successful Christian education programs, our church progressed very much under the leadership of Rev. Wells. Work continued on the murals and the pipe organ was used for the first time. However, weekly offerings were decreasing to the point that the church could not meet all its commitments. Howard deposited his uncashed pay check in the offering plate. It was necessary that he take a part time job to help meet his living expenses. Some



The Reverend Howard Wells

in the congregation felt that he was in breach of his contract as a full time pastor, so he was asked to resign his other job. Rev. Wells left Atlanta on Easter Sunday, 1978, to move to Houston, Texas.

The pulpit of our church was once again vacant, and a new pastor had to be found. The search ended with the Rev. Tom Bigelow who preached his first Sunday by invitation on April 2, 1978. Rev. Bigelow was an excellent preacher and a call was issued from the church. Rev. Bigelow was installed on June 1, 1978.

Shortly after Rev. Bigelow became senior pastor, it became apparent to the congregation that he had a great interest in the charismatic movement. All services of the church, other than the Sunday 2:00 p.m. service, became very charismatic in their approach to worship. This was no problem to the majority of the congregation, but as time passed, it became apparent that this would be Rev. Bigelow's primary emphasis as pastor. Rev. Bigelow placed a great deal of importance on the manifestation of "gifts of the Spirit" at the charismatic services. Rev. Bigelow encouraged members openly to "speak in tongues" as, according to him, this was the first gift of the Spirit that would be given to a believer. Unfortunately, this led to a feeling of division in the church between those who spoke in tongues and those who did not.

Many in the congregation were not opposed to his practice until Rev. Bigelow stated the position that only those members who spoke in tongues were truly "born again." Some in the congregation were outraged by this stand. Then a confrontation ensued at a Monday evening service which was totally disrupted by several members who attacked his authority and his teachings. Rev. Bigelow chose to leave MCC Atlanta and establish another MCC here that could minister to those who felt that his beliefs concerning gifts of the Spirit were correct. Therefore, less than a year after becoming pastor, Rev. Bigelow left and established Grace Metropolitan Community Church here in Atlanta. Many members left with Rev. Bigelow and our church membership reached its lowest point since the church was chartered.

The task of rebuilding the church and finding a new pastor began immediately. The search ended with the Rev. John H. Hose (affectionately known as "Papa John" by the entire Universal Fellowship) who had just retired as pastor of the Tampa church. Rev. Hose was aware of our dilemma and agreed to accept the position of pastor for a short term in order to help us heal and to give us time to find a suitable permanent pastor. "Papa John" was installed as pastor on Sunday, July 15, 1979 at the 2:00 p.m. service.

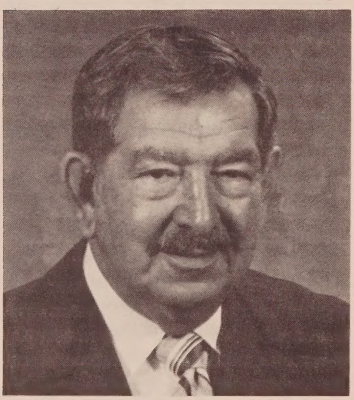
Rev. Hose was a much loved pastor in the Universal Fellowship, having been involved with MCC since its beginning in California by Rev. Perry.

"Papa John" was the author of the Fellowship's original statement of faith and original By-laws, and his great contribution to both the Fellowship and our church cannot be overemphasized. Under his pastorship, the church did indeed heal its wounds and the membership once again began to grow.

Although the church was not vigorously searching for a new pastor, the man who would become our new pastor simply walked through our front door and began attending our services.

The Rev. Jimmy Brock had been a minister for nearly thirty years in the Southern Baptist Convention, but when he decided to inform his denomination of his sexuality, they suddenly had no further need for his services. When a pulpit committee was formed and a diligent search for a replacement for "Papa John" began in early 1981, it was soon apparent to the Pulpit Committee that the quest of our search was to be found in our own congregation.

When the Pulpit Committee first approached Rev. Brock with our desire to have him as pastor, he was just as enthusiastic as we were. Unfortunately, he was neither licensed nor ordained in the Universal Fellowship



The Reverend Elder Dr. John Hose

and therefore could not be installed as pastor. Work began immediately to secure licensing for him which was realized at the 1981 General Conference, and Rev. Brock was installed as Worship Coordinator. After receiving his license, Rev. Brock was officially installed as pastor on Sunday, September 13, 1981 at the 2:00 p.m. service and "Papa John" became Pastor Emeritus of our church.

Our second decade at MCC began a time of strength and optimism. Rev. Brock was assisted by one of the largest ministerial staffs we have had. Our membership grew, committees were fairly well established and the congregation was divided into parishes with each parish assigned to a deacon for Lenten study groups. It was a time of relative tranquility and growth.

Rev. Jimmy Brock remembers that period of our history very well: "We had purged the rolls and we were still over 160, it was a very exciting time."

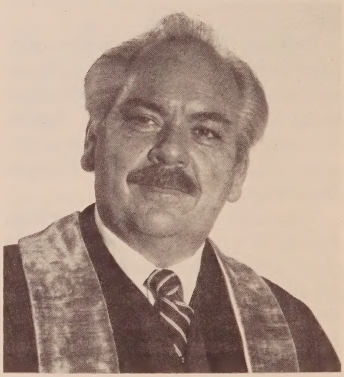
But no one could have imagined what would come to pass that year. For as we celebrated our tenth anniversary, the powers of evil took notice as well. While we had been threatened and vandalized before, we were unprepared for what was to come. Rev. Brock recalls: "There were five break-ins in all. I remember how each one seemed to be worse than the last. The damage increased from ransacking, then the spray painting of the murals, finally the filling of a chalice with red paint which overflowed onto the altar. He recounts when David, the proprietor of the barber shop next door and a Holocaust survivor, walked in and saw the swastikas, he turned white as a sheet. I'll never forget the look on his face."

Then, at the end of Summer the inside of our sanctuary was set afire. The damage was extensive; the community was outraged. For weeks we tried to hold the congregation together by meeting at the Druid Hills Presbyterian Church while the cleanup of our building was completed. Especially upsetting to many was the recommendation of the artist to paint over the murals which could not be cleaned. But more than physical loss was the loss of membership. "The fire really broke our backs," said Rev. Brock, "membership fell to 100 with about 60-80 persons attending worship." Many of our members returned to "mainline" denominations at this point. Whether for anonymity or other reasons, the true reasons are still not known.

Through it all, the church survived. Those who stayed had their convictions galvanized by the incidents and continued to minister to a community that was once denied access to full participation in a church family. However, the final tragedy was the reaction of some of the members to painting over the murals that were damaged in the fire. Rev. Brock was denounced by them for the decision to paint over the murals even thought he had first consulted with the artist and many of the members.

October 1983 was a time of several changes at our church. Rev. Brock left to become senior pastor of MCC Orlando, Florida where he is a well respected preacher. Rev. Michael Piazza, who had been the associate pastor, had already responded to a call to the pulpit of the Jacksonville, Florida MCC. This left us without a logical successor. Bob Sturdivant, who was Moderator of the Board, was appointed Worship Coordinator while the Pulpit Committee began a search for a new pastor. Fortunately for Bob, God supplied in abundance for such a time as this.

Carolyn Mobley recently recounted: "I was a part of the Wor-

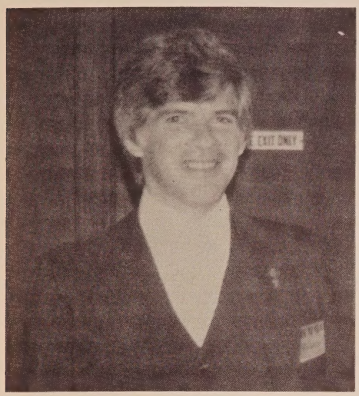


The Reverend Jimmy Brock

ship Team when Bob was Worship Coordinator . . . There were a lot of folks who were very involved – "Papa John," our Paster Emeritus; Jerry Garrison; Dr. Buddy Truluck and Rev. Jimmy Jones, former Baptist mini-

sters; and Rev. Ken Drewek."

Bob and "Papa John" did counseling; "Papa John" performed Holy Unions; and others pitched in to fill the pulpit for the three services each week. The staff had twenty plus mem-



The Reverend Bruce Hill

bers who met monthly. The group included the "doers" of the church, i.e., ushers, com mittee chairpersons, communion servers and custodians. Rumor control, growth, new projects and district conference participation were among the many issues addressed by this expanded staff.

On Easter Sunday, April 22, 1984, there was a celebration with the Rev. Troy Perry in attendance and TV cameras rolling for the mortgage burning ceremony. Thus, we became one of the few churches in the Fellowship that actually owned their own build ing. In his sermon that day, Rev. Perry equated the owning of the building to the coming of freedom, in a symbolic way. Only the year before others had attempted to destroy the church with fire, but that year we celebrated with fire.

Following the congregation's decision not to call Rev. Jack Isabel who was the only acceptable candidate recommended by the Pulpit Committee, the search resumed again. It seemed that the pulpit might be empty indefinitely. Bob Sturdivant, feeling pressure from work and a need to spend time at home, was among those who approached "Papa John" about serving as interim pastor while we continued to search for a permanent pastor. Rev. Hose accepted.

In June, 1984 twelve people (some of whom were no long attending our church on a regular basis because they had become disenchanted and others who had no previous history with an MCC) met to discuss the establishment of a second church that would welcome lesbians and gay men. Out of this meeting grew All Saints Church which two months later petitioned the district to become an MCC Study Group.

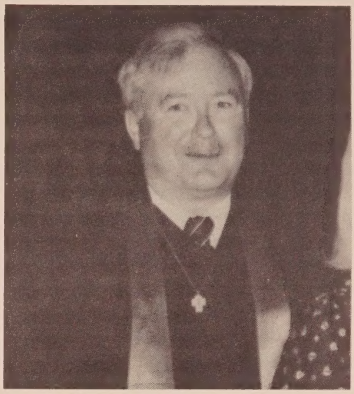
In august of 1984, the church extended a call to the Rev. Bruce Hill, a handsome charismatic minister from California. Under the new pastor's leadership, the deaconite was restarted and several people were soon added to the staff. In 1985, Rev. Hill went on national cable television to answer phone-in questions from peo ple across the nation. Carolyn Mobley, a student clergyperson, was named officially "Love Ambassador" and was sponsored by the church to attend a UFMCC Department of People of Color Conference in Washington, D.C. A coffee house was begun on Friday evenings which was a time for socializing and sharing in an alcohol free environment.

As Winter set in, regular member attendance dropped off, but the number of homeless persons coming to the church increased. Because of the obvious need, the coffee house became an outreach ministry of the church to homeless persons. Sandwiches, chips, and movies were added to the coffee house and another night added to the schedule. This ministry continued until 1991 when it became too problematic to administer.

Also in 1985, Brothers and Sisters Sharing (BASS) was formed and met every two weeks. This group eventually disassociated with our church. By mid 1986 membership in general was decreasing. A 10 o'clock service was initiated, but this only fractured the congregation further.

During this time Rev. Hill was experiencing some personal problems and the congregation continued to decrease until an all time low of twelve people were in attendance for a Sunday worship service in December of 1987.

Following Rev. Hill's resignation in March of 1988, members began to return. Carolyn Mobley had stayed active, so had "Papa John." Rev. Buddy Truluck returned to lead a Len-



The Reverend Charles Larsen

ten series and remained as did several members of the deaconite.

The Rev. Charles "Chuck" Larsen wrote to the church and asked to be considered a candidate for our pulpit. An invitation was extended to him to come to Atlanta. By March 1988 Rev. Larsen was our Senior Pastor. Many changes began, i.e., attendance picked up, Victor Host returned to assume the position of church pianist, the choir was revived and the pastor's office was moved downstairs so that it might be more accessible. The name of the church was changed from Metropolitan Community Church of the Blessed Redeemer (for years simply MCC Atlanta) to First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta. Also, the time of the main service was changed from 2:00 p.m. to 11:00 a.m., the traditional time of worship in most denominations.

During this period the Rev. Reid Christensen arrived in Atlanta with his spouse, Dr. John Moore, who had accepted employment here. Also during this time, "Papa John" was beginning to succumb to liver cancer which was being treated with chemotherapy. He passed away peacefully in bed at his home the day after Thanksgiving.

Rev. Larsen, who had made dramatic changes and had stimulated

renewed growth and enthusiasm, began to feel the pressures placed on him by a full time pastorate and part time employment. Chuck resigned in late November 1988 and returned to San Francisco. Although he was with us for only nine months, his energy, spirit and the changes he brought about, helped tremendously in our rebirth. For this the church will always be grateful.

Rev. Reid Christensen became our Interim Pastor in December 1988 and was elected our Senior Pastor in May of the following year. Rev. Larsen started a growth in our membership and Rev. Christensen nurtured that growth until the church reached a roster of over 100 members. Having been licensed by the fellowship in 1976, Reid became an ordained minister in 1989.

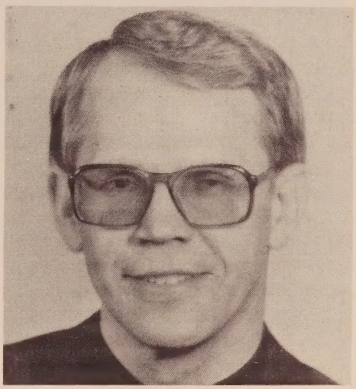
There are many ways to measure growth within the church, i.e., membership, staff participation, programming, financial status and credibility in the community. The physical building and property are not necessary to the existence of a spiritual body. The church has made many strides in the past three years. The organ, once a source of pride and inspiration had to be sold for lack of $100,000 to completely restore it. Services are now accompanied by a baby grand piano.

As for the building itself, the improvements are many – the barber shop was transformed into two fine offices and the shoe shop was converted to an additional meeting room/chapel. Other improvements include flooring in Hose Hall, the exterior painting of the building, new signage, a new lectern, seat covers, and repair to the furnace and roof.

The ministerial staff has increased again and, in many ways, is performing greater ministry than ever before. There are now three UFMCC ministers, one transferring minister, one student clergyperson, plus three deacons. Also, the choir has been active for three years and committees are meeting regularly. In regard to programming, there are "specials" on Sunday nights with guest musicians. The newsletter, BASIC, is published each month with advertisements from businesses within our community. Rev. Marge Ragona and John Moore have taught several classes which are accredited by the Fellowship. Students have come from as far away as Tulsa, Oklahoma to participate.

Recently, Rev. Buddy Truluck responded to a call to the pulpit of MCC Golden Gate and Rev. Emily Bell moved to Louisiana. Carolyn Mobley, former student clergyperson, is now on the ministerial staff of MCC Houston, Texas.

A program of special note is the recently funded HIV pastoral support service. Responding to the AIDS epidemic within our community, First



The Reverend Reid Christensen

MCC has received an $18 thousand dollar grant from a local philanthropic organization. As far back as 1982, we saw one or two of our friends and acquaintances die an early and untimely death due to some type of pneumonia that no one had ever heard of and/or a cancer that was said to be extremely rare. None of us had any idea where these deaths would lead us at that time.

As the second decade of our church continued, so did the list of friends we knew who were dying of AIDS. We have lost not only lay members, but clergy, pastoral staff, and former members of the Board of Directors. However, we did learn to care for each other. If nothing else, AIDS has taught us that we can take care of each other.

One response was the AIDS ministry begun in the Spring of 1989 at the request of Chuck Rice. The group has reached out in may ways. During Christmas of 1989 they sold poinsettias to raise money for the Teddy Bear Project which sent out 200 hand made teddy bears. The next Spring, 200 Easter bunnies were made and given to Project Open Hand. The following Christmas, 200 hand sewn stockings filled with personal care items were sent to five area AIDS organizations: Jerusalem House, Child Kind, AID Atlanta, Common Ground and Grady's ID Clinic.

"You know, making these things is a lot of work and there are time I ask myself: Do we really want to do it again? But I've heard so many stories about how people were touched by receiving their gifts. They create magic and an extended family for those who might not have family near at the holidays," said Dan Lewis, a sewing leader and member of the Board of Directors.

Other ministries assumed by the committee have been in-home support as well as special support of Common Ground by a monthly donation of $50 dollars. Common Ground is a drop-in day care project of the Atlanta Interfaith Network.

Another response from within the church has been the Thursday Night Project, the only official "Names Project Quilting Bee" in the city. The project provides space, materials, information and sewing assistance for anyone interested. To date the project has produced 100 panels as well as supplying a contingent of volunteers to every major showing of the quilt in Atlanta.

After twenty years of joys and challenges, we are a church of Christian peoples, both lesbian/gay and non gay. We are parents, children, sisters and brothers, the wealthy and the poor, many shapes and sizes, and persons of many colors who are reaching out while supporting and touching one another through Jesus Christ.

May God continue to bless each person touched by the ministry of First Metropolitan Community Chruch and may God empower us for the challenge of those ministries which have not been revealed to us as yet.

"Broadway Bound"

First MCC Santuary
Eight O'clock, Friday, January 17, 1992

"Can' Help Lovin' That Man" from "*Show Boat*"	Victor Host
"I Can't Say No" from "*Oklahoma*"	Trudie Barreras
"Younger than Springtime" from "*South Pacific*"	Roger Cobb
"Nothing" from "*A Chorus Line*"	Beth Donavaghn
"On a Clear Day" from "*On a Clear Day*"	John Rogers
"One Hand, One Heart" from "*West Side Story*"	Teresa Kinney
"You're Just in Love" from "*Call Me Madam*"	Ray Barreras and Roger Cobb
"Memories" from "*Cats*"	Judi Jones and Scott Suprina
Dramatic Reading	Rev. Marge Ragona
"Dear Dora, Dangerous Derek, Diesel Dyke" by Rev. Freda Smith	
Choral Medley	First MCC Choir
"Standin' On the Corner"	
"Everything's Comin' Up Roses"	
"Moments to Remember"	
Pianists	Victor Host and Sheila Elliott

20th Anniversary Banquet

Lanier Plaza Hotel and Conference Center
Seven O'clock, Saturday, January 18, 1992

Welcoming	Rev. Reid Christensen, Senior Pastor
Invocation	Rev. Marge Ragona, Associate Pastor
Acknowledgements	Rev. Reid Christensen, Senior Pastor
	Mr. Michael Brooks, Anniversary Committee

Dinner Menu:

Garden Green Salad with Chef's Dressing
Baked Half Chicken a la Orange
Broccolli Polonaise
Parslied Potatoes
Sauteed Cherry Tomatoes Parmesan
Beverages and Assorted Rolls
Key Lime Pie

Introduction of Special Guests	Mr. William Leopard, Senior Deacon
Remarks	Rev. John Gill, Founding Pastor
Group Picture	Mr. Jim Trehearne
Dessert	
Entertainment by Hope and Harmony	Mr. Chuck Lockwood, Director
"Andrew Lloyd Weber in Concert"	a Weber Musical
"When We All Get to Heaven"	arranged by David T. Clydesdale

Morning Celebration of Worship

The Second Sunday after the Epiphany
Eleven O'clock, January 19, 1992

The Prelude — Victor Host, Pianist

+ The Processional Hymn #547
"The Church Is One Foundation"

The Invocation — Rev. Marge Ragona

The Welcome and Announcements
Rev. Reid Christensen

The Preparation for Prayer Hymn #621
"Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus"

The Prayer Of and For the People — Rev. Leevahn Smith
from the prayer book in Hose Hall

The Response — (twice)

God, listen to Your children praying.
God, send Your Spirit in this place.
God, listen to Your children praying.
Send us love; send us power; send us grace.

Old Testament Reading: Genesis: 22:1-19 — John Moore

+ The Gospel Reading: Matthew: 22:34-40 — Steve Vargo

+ The Reponse — "The Gloria"

Glory be to God, Creator of this world. And to our Savior, Christ, Whose death has saved us all. Glory be to the Spirit, Whose presence makes us one. Glory be to God, the Blessed Three in One! Amen.

The Anthem — "It Is Finished"

The Sermon: — Rev. John Gill, Founding Pastor
"Some Things Never Change"

+ The Sermon Hymn #473 — "Make Me a Blessing"

The Offering of God's Tithes & Our Gifts — Ray Wilson

The Offeratory — Teresa Kenney
"Fill My Cup, Lord"

+ The Response Hymn #515, first verse only
"We Give Thee But Thine Own"

The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Rev. Reid Christensen, Celebrant

The Invitation to Confession

The Time of Confession

The General Confession

Merciful God, our fears, doubts, shame, and guilt prevent us from being changed-agents in this world. We don't see ourselves as You see us. We have no confidence in ourselves. We don't see ourselves as worthy human beings. We confess that we have not let our "own stuff" go. Forgive us, O God!

The Absolution

The Prayer That Jesus Taught Us

The Sursum Corda

Celebrant: Our God be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them up to our God.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to God our Creator.

People: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Celebrant: It is a right, a good, and a joyful thing, always and everywhere, to give thanks to You, almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth. Therefore, we praise You, joining our voices with all the company of heaven who forever sing to proclaim the glory of Your Name.

"Sanctus and Benedictus"

Holy, Holy, Holy, Oh God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosannah in the highest! Blessed is Christ, Who comes in the Name of our God. Hosannah in the highest!

The Consecration

The Affirmation of the Mystery of Our Faith

Christ has died. Christ is risen.
Christ is here. Christ will come again!

The Distribution of the Elements

The Great Thanksgiving

+ The Recessional Hymn #82 — "Victory in Jesus"

+ The Benediction — Rev. Jay Neely

+ The Postlude

Twentieth Anniversary Sponsors

Archangels

Lisi Elizabeth Adams
Ray and Trudie Barreras
Michael Brooks

J. R. Finney II
Richard George
Rev. Reid Christensen and John Moore
William Leopard

Frank Puckett
Steve Warren
Ray Wilson

Angels

In Loving Memory of
Robert Sturdivant

Congregation Bet Havarim
Ronnie Hamilton

Gwen and Daisetta Harris
Darryl Walker

Saints

Phil Griffin

In Loving Memory of
Josephine and Antonio Barreras
Charles Hosley
Ted Schuyler

Bill Selvaggio

Twentieth Anniversary Committee

Rev. Reid Christensen
Michael Brooks

Richard George
William Leopard

Daniel Lewis
Rev. Marge Ragona

First MCC Ministerial Staff

Rev. Reid Christensen
Senior Pastor

Rev. Ernie Edwards
Staff Pastor

Rev. Marge Ragona
Associate Pastor

Rev. Leevahn Smith
Staff Clergy

First MCC Board of Directors

Rev. Reid Christensen
Moderator

Trudie Barreras
Dottie Brock

Charles Cunningham
Pat Hussain
Dan Lewis

Ray Wilson
T. C. Williams

Special thanks to

Lisi Elizabeth Adams, Banquet Flowers
William Leopard, Church History Contributor
Ed Nystrom, Kwik Kopy Printing
Jim Trehearne, Photographer
Steve Vargo, Church History Contributor
Darryl Walker, Invitation and Program Layout
*Hope In Harmony**

*Hope In Harmony is a group of Atlanta area volunteer singers and musicians. These volunteers donate both their time and talents in the performance of Christmas and Spring benefit concerts to raise money on behalf of persons living with AIDS. In addition to raising money for peer counseling, housing, food and medical expenses, the group serves as a source for renewed hope of a cure for the AIDS pandemic.

1st M.C.C. Celebrates
BLACK HISTORY MONTH

First M.C.C., a church for all God's people, celebrates **Black History Month** every Sunday night in February at 7:30 p.m. African-American speakers from various denominations of the Christian community will be coming to share their **"Black Worship Experience"**, each bringing their own worship styles and traditions. This year, for the first time a Community Gospel Choir with participants from all walks of life has come together to provide music for the services.

Please accept this special invitation to come worship and experience history, culture, and tradition:

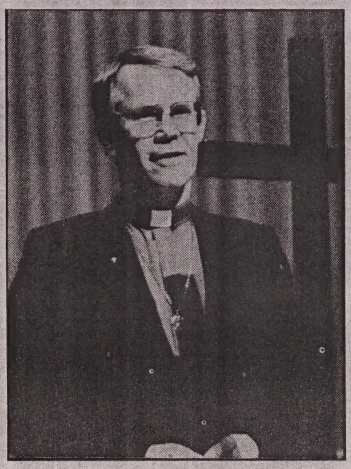
1st Sunday - Feb. 2nd	**Father Bruce Wilkinson** Rector, St. Anthony's Catholic Church
2nd Sunday - Feb. 9th	**Mother Joy Elizabeth Brown** Chaplin, Spellman College Newly Ordained Episcopal Priest
3rd Sunday - Feb. 16th	**Dr. Barbara King** Pastor & Founder Hillside International Truth Center
4th Sunday - Feb. 22nd	**Rev. Delores P. Berry** Evangelist Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

COMM

OUTLINES

REID L. CHRISTENSEN

Age: 58
Relationship status: together 17 years
How long in Atlanta: 4 years
Last book read: "Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalists" by Bishop Spaun
Pet peeve: People Parking in Fire Lanes



There's something about the First M.C.C. (Metropolitan Community Church) when you walk in. Maybe it's all the interesting souls that have gone or the echoes of hundreds of worship services concluded without the new testament being warped by fundamentalists. Perhaps because it's a place where everyone can come to terms with their religious beliefs without judgment, where Christianity, the heart and spirit all meet in unity. A lot of M.C.C.'s warmth and character is shaped by its pastor, Reid Christensen, who has turned the church into a place that he calls "a haven for lesbian and gay refugees from the fundamentalist religions."

"Jerry Falwell always quotes from Romans 1:26," Reid adds. "Falwell says and I quote: 'Romans 1:26 clearly says that homosexuality is an abomination to God.'" At the mention of the quote Reid's eyes flash with an uncharacteristic moment of anger. "It doesn't say that," he explains, "and when people don't run to the bible when they hear him say that on T.V. they feel that it must be true. I say that it is a lie of the devil. The fundamentalists contend we change scripture—but their literal interpretation of scripture ends up backing them into a corner all of the time."

"The bible can't be taken literally without it becoming meaningless," he continues, "and I'm not denying that we look upon the bible as the inspired word of God. But God didn't dictate it. The real perversion is not sexuality, because it's always been a part of human history—God has created homosexuality in all life forms—the perversion is to take a book of love and use it as an instrument of hate. I have people who come in here just this side of suicide by some of the things they've been told by the fundamentalists. This is perversion. God loves all his children."

When listening to Reid speak, his compassion and caring are evident. This is not a man whose belief in God and the Holy spirit is a job—it is his life. The church has a class every six to eight weeks called Homosexuality and the Bible. "We go over all the scripture that has ever been used to condemn our lifestyle," he recounts, "and we read it and discuss it and invariably the question always comes up—'but what does this have to do with homosexuality?' And without pushing anybody into it that's my point. It has nothing to do with homosexuality."

Those familiar with the M.C.C. building know that it isn't exactly the ideal place to have a ministry. "It's paid for," Reid says smiling, "but how much can you do with a place that has no windows?" The church, which has a policy of allowing any lesbian and gay pating in the continuing growth."

M.C.C. has the largest AIDS ministry of any church in Atlanta. In fact, Reid points out, "we were fortunate to receive a grant to enable us to have an Assistant Pastor to work entirely with HIV+ people. And anyone who wants to make a quilt—we're here Thursday night and the sewing machine is ready. And we make the ribbons that are everywhere in Atlanta." Reid admits that there are a lot of memorial services, "but," he clarifies, "we make it a celebration of life." Much of Reid's focus is on the spiritual needs of those who are HIV+.

"Many have a need to make peace with God because they have been estranged from religion so long they are in a spiritual no man's land. I encourage their spirituality which enables people to let go without emotional pain. Death is not an end. It is a beginning to another life in a better place. This is why parents and even funeral homes call me. Can you imagine a preacher doing a memorial service where he is recounting all the supposed sins of the deceased?"

Reid is candid about his own ongoing fight with cancer which was discovered in a routine chest x-ray about a year ago. His hair has grown back (darker than before, he says with a chuckle) after a series of experimental chemotherapy treatments. "My oncologist said I had a fifty-fifty chance. So John (his lover) and I made a will and filed Power of Attorney and I made peace with God. But it wasn't time yet for me. I think God has kept me here because I have so much left to do."

Reid has not always been a pastor. Born in the upper peninsula of Michigan, Reid had a childhood goal of becoming a newspaper publisher. He attended Michigan State University in East Lansing and received a journalism degree and went to work in a moderately sized town in Illinois in advertising for the local daily paper. "Yet I felt I had the calling when I was about 20, but you've got to put yourself in the space of 38 years ago. I didn't know how you could reconcile homosexuality with being a pastor."

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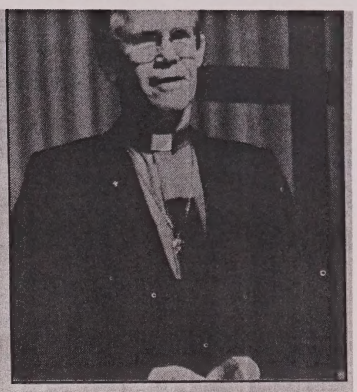

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Those familiar with the M.C.C. building know that it isn't exactly the ideal place to have a ministry. "It's paid for," Reid says smiling, "but how much can you do with a place that has no windows?" The church, which has a policy of allowing any lesbian and gay organization to use their meeting space for free (though all make unsolicited contributions) has simply run out of room. Recently an offer has been made on the building and Reid is considering, with the backing of his congregation, consulting architects and building on a new site. "All over the Midwest I have begun congregations with as little as ten members—and when they were established I moved on to the next beginning. Here it's nice to be participating in the continuing growth."

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Reid's family, both extended and siblings, are comfortable with his lifestyle. He was able to offer his father his first and only communion before his death, which Reid says was "one of the most wonderful experiences of my life. Dad said he knew what Jesus Christ meant to me." And to Reid freedom in Jesus Christ means, "the freedom to be what we are. Because then, even if it is just on Sunday, we are honest with God's love."

IAN W. GINSBURG

FIRST METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF ATLANTA

Board Meeting Agenda
August 16, 1992

Opening Prayer

REGULAR ITEMS
- Clerk's Report
- Pastor's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- AIDS Ministry Report (Chip Carson)
- Minister of Membership Report
- Committee Reports:
  - Administration: (Jim)
    - Building (M&C) Lay Delegates Historian
    - Office Volunteers Stewardship
  - Social: (Diane)
    - Birthday Cof.Hrs./Dinners Spec.Soc.Event
  - Outreach: (Daniel,T.C., Diane)
    - AIDS Ministry Outreach Sewing Guild
    - Chr.Soc.Action Community Outreach
    - Food Banks Publicity
    - Publication
  - Worship: (Al)
    - Audio-Visual Music Flower
    - Worship Prep. Ushering
  - Christian Education: (Dottie)
    - Bookstore Drama Education
  - Nominating - Building - Anniversary - Budget Committees

OLD BUSINESS
- Completion of Chapel (bookcases, furniture, door, carpeting)
- Soundproofing Pastor's Study
  (ceiling tile, door, a/c vent, carpeting)
- Freda Smith visit April 16-17-18, 1993
- Carolyn Mobley for Homecoming
- Update on Building(s)
- Other

NEW BUSINESS
- Correspondence:
- Panama City MCC
- ALANAR, INC.
- Annual Fall Retreat
- Building Use Request
- Basic Assignments
- Schedule Next Board Meeting (August)
- Review Calendar
- Other

Closing Prayer

FIRST METROPITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF ATLANTA
Board Meeting
July 19, 1992

The opening prayer was given at 1:00 PM by Reid Christensen.

All Board members present except Trudie Barraras. Present from the Congregation were Dale Delgado, John Hall, Roger Cobb, Chuck Rice, Sheila Elliot, Teresa Hughes, Elizabeth Pope, Charlie Reid, and Anna Siciliano.

The Clerk's report was moved for approval by TC Williams and seconded by Dottie Brock. Motion carried.
Additional minutes from polling the Board on a new building were moved for acceptance by TC and seconded by Ray Wilson. Motion carried.

The Pastor's report was moved for acceptance by Dan Lewis and seconded by Dottie. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report was moved for acceptance by Dan and seconded by Diane Burrell. Motion carried.

Reid gave a verbal report on the AIDS Ministry.

John Hall gave a verbal report on the building. TC moved and Dottie seconded approval of$448.00 plus tax to purchase an air conditioner unit to replace the office unit. Motion carried.

TC moved and Diane seconded that Beverly Madding be offered $5.00 per hour for 16 hours a week to be an office administrator assistant. Reid is to inquire if she would like the job. If so, the position would become effective 7-21-92.Motion carried. TC is to pick up the appropriate paperwork.

TC asked for approval for an outing of the females to have an overnight spiritual camping retreat. After hering the objections from Reid, Al Brannon, and Ray, the motion was amended to include all members and friends. Al moved and Ray seconded that the discussion be discontinued and the matter be discussed with the Staff. 6 agreed, 1 opposed, and 1 abstained.

A LOVE offering will be taken at all services for Jeri Ann Harvey.

Dottie moved and Al seconded that a LOVE offering or Honorarium will be given when appropriate. Whichever is greater, but not both. Motion carried.

Respectfully decline support for Sampson.

August 16th to be next Board meeting.

3:15PM, Reid gave closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa "TC" Williams

FIRST METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF ATLANTA

Pastor's Report
August 16. 1992

The following is a list of my activities for July 1992

13	Worship Services Attended
4	Sermons Delivered
1	Consecration of Communion
10	Communions Served
3	Other Service Participation
4	Bulletins Prepared
2	Hospital Visits
0	Home Visits
0	Portable Communions Served
3	Power Hour Services Attended
1	Carry-in Dinners Attended
11	Counseling Sessions
4	Holy Union Counseling Sessions
1	Holy Unions Performed
3	Conducted Memorial Service
3	Inquirer's Classes Taught
1	Reception of New Members
1	Holy Baptism
1	Board of Directors' Meeting
1	Ministerial Staff Meeting
2	Individual Meetings w/ Staff
5	Articles Prepared for Basic
4	Meetings Held on Behalf of MCC
392	Miles Driven on Behalf of the Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Reid L. Christensen
Senior Pastor

TO: Ray Wilson, Treasurer

DATE: 4/20/92

FROM: M. Ragona, Christian Education Committee

RE: Budget Request

With the formalization of the children's Sunday school as a ministry of the church, and given that a 6-8 children are now attending this regularly, after consultation with the teachers, parents, etc. we would like to request the following:

Teacher materials 4 quarters @ 8.95 per quarter.
Student materials 4 quarters @ 2.95 per quarter per child

Teacher materials	36.00
Student materials	94.40
Total	$130.40

Plus other incidental materials (construction paper, crayons, scissors, etc.) to assure that the program works effectively, and for appropriate small inducements for the children to behave and participate well, such as "Cross and Crown" ($24.00) or similar items.

35.60

Grand Total $175.00 per year

cc: Dotty Brock

TO: Ray Wilson, Treasurer DATE: 4/20/92

FROM: M. Ragona, Christian Education Committee MR. RE: Budget Request

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Grand Total $175.00 per year

cc: Dotty Brock

Materials would be ordered from a standard Sunday School supplier, David C. Cook, and would begin c̄ Summer 1992. MR.

First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta

AGENDA

Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting - May 17, 1992

Roll Call
Prayer
Approve Agenda

REPORTS:

- Clerk's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Senior Pastor's Report
- Committee Reports
  - Administrative
    - Building
    - Historian
    - Lay Delegates
    - Membership
    - Office Volunteers
    - Stewardship
  - Social
    - Birthday
    - Coffee Hours/Dinners
    - Special Social Events
  - Community Outreach
    - AIDS Ministry
    - AIDS Outreach Sewing Guild
    - Christian Social Action
    - Community Outreach
    - Food Banks
    - ~~Newsletter~~
    - Publicity - Publications
  - Worship
    - Audio-Visual
    - Flower
    - Music
    - Worship Preparation
    - Ushering
  - Christian Education
    - Bookstore
    - Drama
    - Education

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- Verbal Report on Possible Sale/Purchase of Building
- Report of Nominating Committee
- Election of Three Board Members to Fill Unexpired Terms
- Adopt Budget

Prayer

Drane Burrell
Jim Henkler
al
Gene Sloan

FIRST METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF ATLANTA
Ministerial Staff Meeting

May 5, 1992

Opening Prayer

REGULAR ITEMS
- Pastor's Report
- AIDS Ministry Report
- Attendance Report/Recommendations to Board
- Parish Activities new groups.
- (Monthly Reports Due)
- Committee Reports (as necessary)
  - Administrative: J.R. - Doug
    - Building (M&C) | Lay Delegates | Historian
    - Membership | Office Volunteers | Stewardship
  - Social Outreach: Steve
    - Birthday | Coffee Hrs/Dinners | Soc Events
  - Outreach: Leevahn & Bill S.
    - AIDS Ministry | Outreach Sewing Guild
    - Community Outreach | Christian Social Action
    - Food Banks | Publicity/Publications
  - Worship: Bill L. & Shelia
    - A/V | Music (Choir) | Flower
    - Greeters | Worship Prep. | Ushering
  - Christian Ed.: Marge
    - Bookstore Books from Conf. | Education | Drama

OLD ITEMS
- ✓AIDS Candle Addition
- Athens Outreach
- "Homosexuality and the Bible" May 12, at 7:00 p.m. Marge
- "Discover Your Spiritual Gifts" (?)
- COGLRO Healing Service, May 16, 8 p.m. - Saturday
- Homecoming Service with Dinner (?)
- Other

NEW ITEMS
- Correspondence
- Mother's Day
- Congregational Meeting Agenda
- Troy Perry Visit Plans MAY 29, 30, 31
  - -Music - FRI, SAT, SUN.
  - -Publicity
  - -Dinner(s)
- Sunday Evening Schedule
  - -June, Doug Aug-Marge
  - -Sept., J.R.
- Permanent Bulletin Cover Recommendation
- Review Calendar Inquirer's - June 13th. Spiritual Gifts
- Other Ecumenical Service - Quilt & Mem. Svcs - Wld Cong. Center
- Lou Kavar

CLOSING PRAYER

MARCE

First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta
Telephone Directory

Barreras, Raymond (Ray) 989 Drewery St. NE 30306.....892-7219
Barreras, Trudie 989 Drewery St. NE 30306.....892-7219
*Burnham, Rene' M. 5583 Little Mill Rd. Buford 30518.....271-1805
Cestaro, Diane 505 Noble Creek Dr. 30327.....355-9855
Douglass, Stephen Apt. # 1-2 30329.....876-8522
Edwards, Jabesh 505 Noble Creek Dr. 30327.....355-9855
Grizzle, Steve Apt. # R-8 30324.....876-2529
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Johnson, Scott P.O.Box 47013 30362.....636-1127
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-Lincoln, Gil 2518 Marling Dr. Columbia SC 29204.....(803) 738-0718
Madding, Beverly Apt # 22-G 30318.....355-4623
Madding, Sarah Apt # 22-G 30318.....355-4623
Miller, Sheryl 197 Kettlewood Dr. Lilburn 30247.....449-7155
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*Murray, Joanne 5583 Little Mill Rd. Buford 30518.....271-1805
Neely, Jay 453 Euclid Terr. 30307.....523-6823
Oder, Harry 1890 Hickory Rd. Chamblee 30341.....458-4815
Rhea, James (Bo) Apt. # R-8 30324.....876-2529
-Ricks, Melodie 785 North Parkwood Road Decatur 30030.....371-1890
Rogan, George 453 Euclid Terr. 30307.....523-6823
Sloan, Gene 1890 Hickory Rd. Chamblee 30341.....458-4815
-Vargo, Mary 24-1/2 W. Alexis Ecorse MI 48229.....(313) 383-6943
-Vargo, Richard 24-1/2 W. Alexis Ecorse MI 48229.....(313) 383-6943
-Vargo, Stephen S. 837 Dill Av. NW 30310.....755-8197
going to Greenville.

* Denotes Prospective

* * * END OF REPORT * * *

Liz Leech
Jean Rarick

Commitment levels - Enjoy -
match level of programming to level of commit

Release gifted leaders
1. vision caster
2. shepherd
3. organizer
4. Recruiter / Sponsor

Support structures
1. short-term training
2. Regular support / encouragement
3. Evaluation + accountability

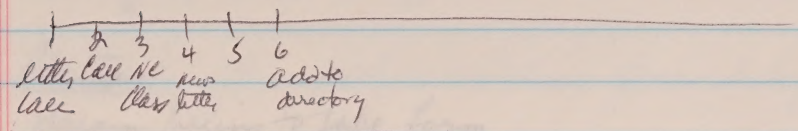
group multiplication to avoid fatigue
1. form new groups
2. clustering in smaller groups

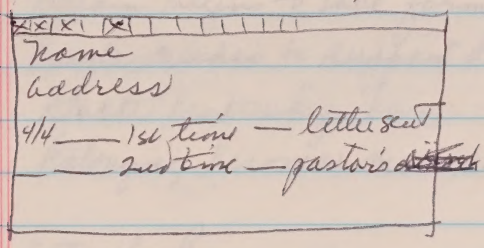
Aim at responsive populations
1. Det. potential ministry focus groups.
2. Identify characteristics of group leaders

Effective tech. of effective group formation / function

We are Driven - Compulsive Behaviors America Applauds.

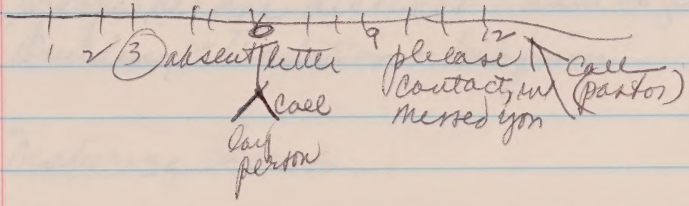
Does somebody care if I'm not there?
Bored & apathetic church member (19 weeks notice absence)
3 times in a row. "We missed you letter."



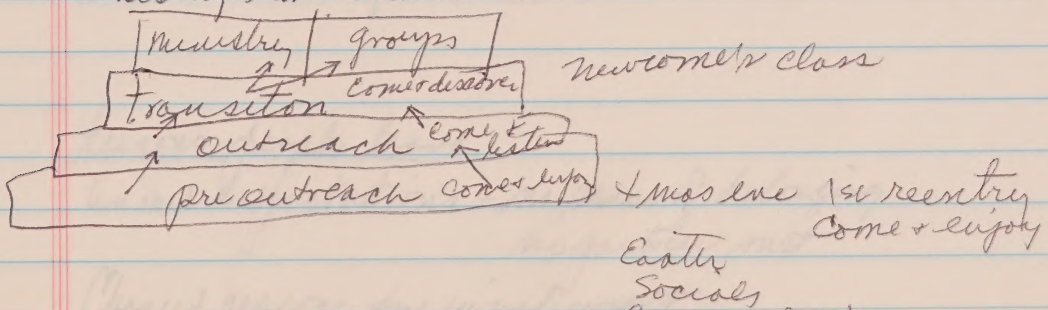


Call — 2nd week
Invite to newcomer's class or reception

Like dating, not too fast, not too soon, not too slow.



Ministry Environment



Leading & managing your church –
Dying for change

Rapid Growth =
Attitude toward new people
Emergence of Leadership
Ease of belonging
Developing a dream.

Plateau
Dream begins to take form
People needed to support dream.
Stable leadership base.
Belonging becomes more difficult.

After the Peak
The Goal is Reached
Tenure becomes very important
Groups become distinct - hard to get into inner circle.
Building & tradition - turfism -

Maturing Church

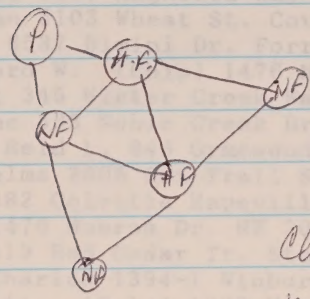
Tend to be ⇒ right hand side

Reasons people leave
Unmet Expectations - no sense of belonging
no partner met
Changed reasons for involvement
Conflict (1/3 of losses, pastor, member)
Other issues (Burnout) (warm one leadership

Sponsors - Connect c̄ newcomers, + help them connect c̄ others.

Newcomers' night at pastors - (with staff/Board)

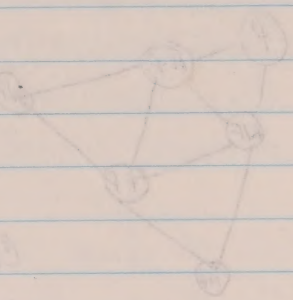
Supper 6 - dinner 8 - building friendships.



Intentional networking - meet people in safe environment.

Church socials - specific invitation to newer individuals.

Newcomer's class - Class for newcomer's, class to get ~~Pastor's class~~ - to know church. 7 weeks.



First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta
Telephone Directory

Adams, Lisi E. P.O.Box 13452 30324-0452.....321-6969
Allen, Lisa Lot 1-B Douglasville 30135.....489-0877
Anderson, Clare 11505 Bocford Place Alpharetta 30202.....
Ball, Tanas C. 5474 Prinston Oaks Ln. Sugar Hill 30518.....932-0906
Ballance, Michelle 3098 Commons Crossing Snellville 30278.....985-4636 299-9154
Barreras, Raymond (Ray) 989 Drewery St. NE 30306.....892-7219
Barreras, Trudie 989 Drewery St. NE 30306.....892-7219
Bennefield, Charlie Apt. A-2 30324.....607-7096
Bickley, Lonny Apt. # 1 GA 30244 30329.....636-0889
Bigger, Mark Apt. # O-3 30319.....816-4141
Bodle, Ross 1226 Stonybrook Dr. 30316.....627-0959
Brannon, Al Apt. # 3 30309.....885-9642
Brock, Dottie (Dot Dot) 225 Stovall St. SE 30316.....584-5835 551-7226
Brooks, Michael 2564 Bradford Sq. NE 30345.....325-5208 993-5600
Brownlee, Jan Lot # 65 Griffin 30223.....412-0163
Burrell, Diane 5515 Magnolia Way Buford 30518.....932-0702
Campbell, Jean 5103 Wheat St. Covington 30209.....786-2529
Canup, Susan 6537 Bimini Dr. Forrest Park 30050.....968-4251
Carson, Richard W. (Chip) 1476 Monroe Dr. NE 30324.....846-6469 872-2246
Carter, Britt 345 Winter Creek Way Commerce 30529.....335-9665
Cestaro, Diane 505 Noble Creek Dr. 30327.....355-9855
Christensen, Reid L. 846 Ormewood Terr. 30316.....627-4329 872-2246
Christie, Thelma 2006 Fox Trail Snellville 30278.....939-7116
Clark, Jim 3382 Colville Hapeville 30354-1921.....766-2384
Cobb, Roger 1476 Monroe Dr. NE 30324.....876-0012
Coker, Ray 1419 Red Cedar Tr. Stone Mountain 30083.....981-5006
Cunningham, Charles 1394-1 Winburn Av. East Point 30344.....
Delgado, Evelio (Dale) 1690 N. Druid Hills Rd. NE 30319.....633-3955
Douglass, Stephen Apt. # 1-2 30329.....876-8522
Dye, Bob 8319 Hilltop Rd. Jonesboro 30236.....478-8911
Edwards, Ernie Apt. # C-13 30329.....321-0379
Edwards, Jabesh 505 Noble Creek Dr. 30327.....355-9855
Edwards, Max Apt. # 7 30308.....876-7554
Elliott, Sheila L. 24-G Covington Rd. Avondale Estates 30002.....297-9671
Finney II, Johnny R. (J.R.) Apt. # 3 30307.....373-5111
Forsyth, Nancy 1309 Arnold Av. 30324.....
Garrett, Arlene 3098 Commons Crossing Snellville 30278.....634-4842
George, Richard 1553 Johnson Rd. NE 30306.....875-4678
Grizzle, Steve Apt. # R-8 30324.....876-2529
Hall, John 1690 N. Druid Hills Rd. NE 30319.....633-3955
Hall, Robert Apt. # F-1 30324.....881-1547
Hamby, Elizabeth (Beth) 1850-A Skyland Rd. 30319.....681-4262
Hamilton, Ronnie P.O.Box 5626 Rome 30161.....234-4981
Harris, Bette A. Apt. # D-3 Decatur 30030.....627-0542
Harris, Dais P.O.Box 5511 30307.....
Harris, Gwendolyn P.O.Box 5511 30307.....
Helton, Tom 3402 Misty Harbor Tr. Doraville 30340.....938-6436
Hicklen, Lee Apt. # 1 GA 30244 30329.....636-0889
Higdon, Dennis P.O.Box 855 Greensboro 30642.....486-4649
Hines, Sheila L. 5474 Prinston Oaks Ln. Sugar Hill 30518.....
Hinkley, Jim 159 Peachtree Dr. Riverdale 30274.....603-1881 968-1483 Ext. 155
Hobbs, Dan 3868 Westwood Path Stone Mountain 30083.....299-1491
Honeycutt, Wanda Apt. # 9 College Park 20337.....767-7495

First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta
Telephone Directory

Host, Victor Apt. # EE2 30309.....352-841
Hubble, Kenny Apt. A-2 30324.....607-709
Hussain, Cherry J. 2729 Rovena Ct. Decatur 30034-3811.....244-864
Hussain, Patricia L. (Pat) 2729 Rovena Ct. Decatur 30034-3811.....244-864
Hyatt, Terri Apt. # 9 30307.....681-426
Jennings, Jarron Apt. # 12 30306.....875-756
Johnson, Ronnie 615 Linwood Av. 30306.....873-377
Johnson, Scott P.O.Box 47013 30362.....636-112
Jones, Judi Apt. # D-3 Decatur 30030.....373-308
Jones, Mary 5736 Willow Way Buford 30518.....945-952
Kane, Darryl R. 268-A Iswald St. 30316.....577-770
Kelly, David Apt # 329 Los Angeles CA 90069.....
Kidd, Joan 1670 Eaglecreek Tr. Cumming 30130.....887-734
Kinchen, Raymond (Ray) Apt # A-15 30324.....892-274
Lambert, Shirley Apt.A 30306.....875-787
Lay, Michael (Mike) Apt # A-15 30324.....892-274
Leech, Liz P.O.Box 70393 Montgomery AL 36107.....(205) 263-352
Leopard, Bill 707-A Woodland 30316.....622-7781 244-424
Lewallen, Jean 5103 Wheat St. Covington 30209.....786-252
Lewis, Daniel (Dan) Apt # 4 30308.....875-221
Lincoln, Gil 2518 Marling Dr. Columbia SC 29204.....(803) 738-071
Lynn, Thomas G. (Tom) 23 Sherwood Loop McDonough 30253.....914-190
Madding, Beverly Apt # 22-G 30308.....355-462
Madding, Sarah Apt # 22-G 30308.....355-462
Matthews, Leslie R. Apt # G-10 30329.....325-766
McCon, Bruce Route 2, Box 6126 Auburn 30203.....867-581
McGovern, Kelly Apt. # 17 30307-1434.....653-047
Meade, Peggy Apt. # 9 30307.....681-426
Miller, Sheryl 197 Kettlewood Dr. Lilburn 30247.....449-715
Mitchell, Don PO Box 47013 30362.....
Moore, John R. 846 Ormewood Terr. 30316.....627-4329 488-536
Neely, Jay 453 Euclid Terr. 30307.....523-682
Nicholson, Sally 1850-A Skyland Rd. 30319.....
O'Kelly, Kathy 3424-3L Fairway Oaks Dr. Lawrenceville 30244.....921-382
Oder, Harry 1890 Hickory Rd. Chamblee 30341.....458-481
Patterson, Robin 345 Winter Creek Way Commerce 30529.....335-966
Paulaskas, Diane M. 1045 Shepherds Ln. NE 30324.....636-9355 872-060
Plaisance, Mike 703 Confederate Av. 30312.....622-103
Poppa, John Apt. # 7 30309.....872-875
Prewett, Laverne Apt. # 9 College Park 20337.....
Puckett, Frank 1553 Johnson Rd. NE 30306.....875-4678
Ragona, Marge Apt.A 30306.....875-7878 325-643
Rarick, Jean C. P.O.Box 70393 Montgomery AL 36107.....(205) 263-3527
Ray, Bob P.O.Box 831173 Stone Mountain 30083.....
Rhea, James (Bo) Apt. # R-8 30324.....876-252
Ricks, Melodie 505 Noble Creek Dr. 30327.....355-985
Robinson, Mike P.O.Box 831173 Stone Mountain 30083.....
Rogan, George 453 Euclid Terr. 30307.....523-6823
Rogers, John 905 Drewry 30306.....875-099
Ruziskey, John M. 2416-E Dunwoody Crossing Dunwoody 30338.....
Sauls, Janet 817 N. Highland Av. NE 30306.....885-9317
Selvaggio, William (Bill) 550 Allen Rd. NE 30324.....874-3927
Showman, James K. 183 Clubraod Cir. Stone Mountain 30083.....292-7632

First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta
Telephone Directory

Siciliano, Anna C. 3424-3L Fairway Oaks Dr. Lawrenceville 30244.....243-494
Sloan, Gene 1890 Hickory Rd. Chamblee 30341.....458-481
Smith, Leevahn 730 Hill St. SE 30315.....624-399
Soucey, Ron D. Apt. # 275 Las Vegas NV 89103.....(702) 876-511
Stacey, Robert 2680 N. Martin St. East Point 30344.....
Station, Emanuel J. 1979 Kimberly Village Ln. Marietta 30067.....850-111
Stohrer, Dianne # A-34 Smyrna 30082.....319-715
Stone, Bob 3421-D Durden Cir. 30319.....
Strickland, Jamie # A-34 Smyrna 30082.....319-715
Swaney, Nelson Apt. # 10 East Point 30344.....209-880
Swindell, Rufus Apt. # 14 30312.....577-609
Swindell, Trip Box 76 30324.....816-874
Thomas, Hugh (Wolf) 942 N. Highland Av. NE 30306.....
Thoreson, Ross E. Apt. 1336 Marietta 30067.....428-616
Trehearne, Jim Apt. B-144 Riverdale 30274.....994-070
Turley, Roger 3402 Misty Harbor Tr. Doraville 30340.....
Tyburski, Mike 905 Drewry 30306.....875-099
Vargo, Mary 24-1/2 W. Alexis Ecorse MI 48229.....(313) 383-694
Vargo, Richard 24-1/2 W. Alexis Ecorse MI 48229.....(313) 383-694
Vargo, Stephen S. 837 Dill Av. NW 30310.....755-819
Waller, Gail P.O.Box 7448 Lilburn 30226.....717-936
Walls, Ricky P.O.Box 831173 Stone Mountain 30083.....
Williams, Kevin 183 Clubraod Cir. Stone Mountain 30083.....292-736
Williams, Teresa (T.C.) 1670 Eaglecreek Tr. Cumming 30130.....887-734
Wilson, James 2416-E Dunwoody Crossing Dunwoody 30338.....717-152
Wilson, Ray 550 Allen Rd. NE 30324.....874-3927 607-310
Worthen, Marcus Apt. # 7 30309.....872-875
Yeater, Bill Apt. # 12 30306.....875-756
York, Steven A. Apt. # 20E Jonesboro 30236-1574.....968-153

* * * END OF REPORT * * *

MARGE

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Rogan, George 453 Euclid Terr. 30307.....523-6823
Sheldon, Phillip S. 103 N. Walnut St. Ridgewood NJ 17450.....(201) 612-0756
Sloan, Gene 1890 Hickory Rd. Chamblee 30341.....458-4815
Vargo, Mary 24-1/2 W. Alexis Ecorse MI 48229.....(313) 383-6943
Vargo, Richard 24-1/2 W. Alexis Ecorse MI 48229.....(313) 383-6943
Vargo, Stephen S. 837 Dill Av. NW 30310.....755-8197
York, Steven A. apt. 1-B Jonesboro 30236-1574.....960-8704

on Shelia's list

OK

* Denotes Prospective

Belongs on list c̄ Jan Brownlee + Susan Camp

* * * END OF REPORT * * *

Return to the
Pine Mountain Camp

MARGE

First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta
Household Phone Directory

Barreras, Raymond (Ray) Barreras, Trudie	989 Drewery St. NE Atlanta, GA 30306	(404) 892-7219
Cestaro, Diane Ricks, Melodie Edwards, Jabesh	505 Noble Creek Dr. Atlanta, GA 30327	(404) 355-9855
Douglass, Stephen	3446 Buford Hwy. NE Apt. # 1-2 Atlanta, GA 30329	(404) 876-8522
Grizzle, Steve Rhea, James (Bo)	1616 Piedmont Av. NE Apt. # R-8 Atlanta, GA 30324	(404) 876-2529
Harris, Bette A. Jones, Judi	212 Adair St. Apt. # D-3 Decatur, GA 30030	(404) 627-0542 (404) 373-3089
Higdon, Dennis	P.O.Box 855 Greensboro, GA 30642	(404) 486-4649
Johnson, Scott OOT	P.O.Box 47013 Atlanta, GA 30362	(404) 636-1127
Lincoln, Gil	2518 Marling Dr. Columbia, SC 29204	(803) 738-0718
Madding, Beverly Sarah	1185 Collier Rd. Apt # 22-G Atlanta, GA 30318	(404) 355-4623
Miller, Sheryl	197 Kettlewood Dr. Lilburn, GA 30247	(404) 449-7155
*Murray, Joanne *Burnham, Rene' M.	5583 Little Mill Rd. Buford, GA 30518	(404) 271-1805
Neely, Jay Rogan, George · School	453 Euclid Terr. Atlanta, GA 30307	(404) 523-6823
Oder, Harry Sloan, Gene	1890 Hickory Rd. Chamblee, GA 30341	(404) 458-4815
Sheldon, Phillip S.	103 N. Walnut St. Ridgewood, NJ 17450	(201) 612-0756
Vargo, Richard Vargo, Mary	24-1/2 W. Alexis Ecorse, MI 48229	(313) 383-6943
Vargo, Stephen S.	837 Dill Av. NW Atlanta, GA 30310	(404) 755-8197

First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta
Household Phone Directory

York, Steven A.	701 Morrow Ind. Blvd. apt. 1-B Jonesboro, GA 30236-1574	(404) 960-8704

* Denotes Prospective

* * * END OF REPORT * * *

Jean & Jean
Campbell - Lewallen

FIRST METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH of ATLANTA
800 North Highland
Atlanta, Georgia 30306

BLACK HISTORY MONTH, CELEBRATION 1992

SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP SERVICES

MUSICAL CALL TO WORSHIP	"Something Good is Going to Happen to You"
INVOCATION	**Reverend Leevahn Smith** Coordinator, Black History Programs
WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS	**Reverend Reid Christensen** Senior Pastor
BLACK NATIONAL ANTHEM	"Lift Every Voice And Sing (Gospel Ensemble)
READING	**Tray Johnson**, Member Gospel Ensemble
FELLOWSHIP PRAYER	**Bill Selvaggio**, Deacon Candidate, First MCC
INTRODUCTION OF THE SPEAKER	**Reverend Marge Ragona**, Associate Pastor, First MCC
SPECIAL MUSIC	"Swing Low Medley" (Gospel Ensemble)
MESSAGE (including scripture)	**Mother Joy Elizabeth Brown**, Chaplain, Spelman College
OFFERING	**Ray Wilson Treasurer**, Board of Directors, First MCC
OFFERTORY SONG	"Fear Not My Child" (featuring **Gam**
COMMUNION	**Deacon J. R. Finney II**, Celebrant Servers - **Shelia Elliott**, **Steve Vargo & Mother Brown**
BENEDICTION	**Mother Joy Brown**

Mary

First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta
Household Phone Directory

Barreras, Raymond (Ray) Barreras, Trudie	989 Drewery St. NE Atlanta, GA 30306	(404) 892-7219
Cestaro, Diane Ricks, Melodie Edwards, Jabesh	505 Noble Creek Dr. Atlanta, GA 30327	(404) 355-9855
Douglass, Stephen Letter of Concern	3446 Buford Hwy. NE Apt. # 1-2 Atlanta, GA 30329	(404) 876-8522
Grizzle, Steve ~~Rhea, James (Bo)~~	1616 Piedmont Av. NE Apt. # R-8 Atlanta, GA 30324	(404) 876-2529
Harris, Bette A. Jones, Judi	212 Adair St. Apt. # D-3 Decatur, GA 30030	(404) 627-0542 (404) 373-3089
Higdon, Dennis	P.O.Box 855 Greensboro, GA 30642	(404) 486-4649
Johnson, Scott Don	P.O.Box 47013 Atlanta, GA 30362	(404) 636-1127
Lincoln, Gil	2518 Marling Dr. Columbia, SC 29204	(803) 738-0718
Madding, Beverly Sarah	1185 Collier Rd. Apt # 22-G Atlanta, GA 303~~0~~8	(404) 355-4623
Miller, Sheryl	197 Kettlewood Dr. Lilburn, GA 30247	(404) 449-7155
*Murray, Joanne Invite to them. *Burnham, Rene' M.	5583 Little Mill Rd. Buford, GA 30518	(404) 271-1805
Neely, Jay Rogan, George	453 Euclid Terr. Atlanta, GA 30307	(404) 523-6823
Oder, Harry Sloan, Gene	1890 Hickory Rd. Chamblee, GA 30341	(404) 458-4815
~~Sheldon, Phillip S.~~	103 N. Walnut St. Ridgewood, NJ 17450	(201) 612-0756
Vargo, Richard Vargo, Mary	24-1/2 W. Alexis Ecorse, MI 48229	(313) 383-6943
Vargo, Stephen S.	837 Dill Av. NW Atlanta, GA 30310	(404) 755-8197

Liz Leech

First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta
Household Phone Directory

~~York, Steven A.~~	701 Morrow Ind. Blvd. Apt. # 20E Jonesboro, GA 30236-1574	(404) 968-1536

* Denotes Prospective

* * * END OF REPORT * * *

SERVICE OF HEALING
May 16, 1992

Processional Hymn
Great is Thy Faithfulness #98

Call to Worship
It is a good thing to give thanks unto our God, and to sing praises to your name, O most high! To show forth your loving-kindness in the morning and your faithfulness every night.

Welcome-Invocation

Psalm 34
I will bless you at all times; your praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul makes its boast in you, O God; let the afflicted hear and be glad.

O magnify our God with me, and let us exalt God's name together!

I sought my God and was answered; I was delivered from all my fears.

Look to God, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed.

The angel of God encamps around those who fear God and delivers them.

O taste and see that our God is good! Happy is the one who takes refuge in God.

Stand in awe of God, you saints, for those who revere God have no want.

The eyes of God are toward the righteous, and God's ears toward their cry.

God is near the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.

Prayer
Bringer of Light, Sun of the soul, when the shadows of evening fall and darkness ends the day, our thoughts turn to You who dwells where night never comes. If we have lost our way in doubt, so that we despair, may your light shine the clearer within us. If we have turned aside from you, do not leave us, but lead us back by your kindly light, until in your flame our sins are consumed and in the light of your countenance we rest in peace. As stars come out when the sun goes down, and voices are heard in the silence which were drowned in the noise of the day, so let us be silent now, and rest in the joy of your continual presence.

SILENT PRAYER Amen.

Hymn: Be Not Afraid Printed

Contemporary Reading

Litany of Prayer

God, we pray this night for all who are in distress; physical, emotional or spiritual.
God, hear our prayer.

We pray for all those who are alone and in need of companionship. friendship, or love.
God, hear our prayer.

We pray for all those who are depressed and despairing and who need again to know how to hope.
God, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who are ill, injured or in pain.
God, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who labor to find healing, prevention, and cures.
God, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who bring solace, comfort, and strength.
God, hear our prayer.

We pray for those in need of your presence in the face of insurmountable odds.
God, hear our prayer.

Finally, O God, we pray for ourselves, for we, too, need to know you better.
God, hear our prayer and grant us your peace. Amen.

Hymn: The God of Abraham Praise #332

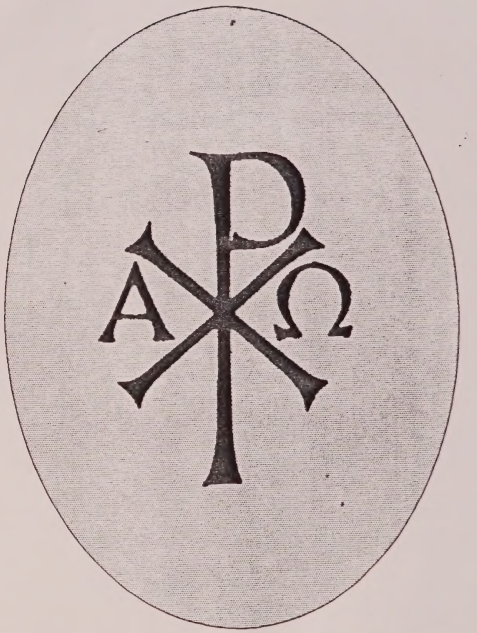
Meditation

Invitation to Annointing, Laying on of Hands, Personal Prayer.

Recessional Hymn
Now on Land and Sea Descending Printed

Benediction

We welcome all of you to First Metropolitan Community Church for this our first service as a participant in Atlanta's Council of Gay/Lesbian Religious Organization's monthly ministry of healing in our community.



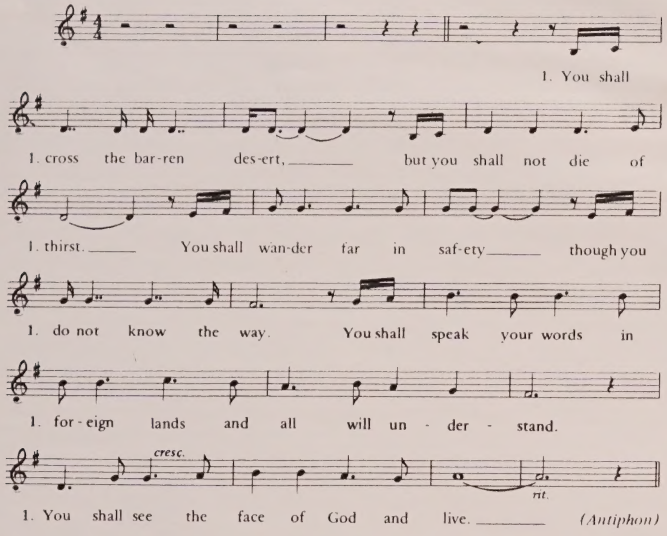
FIRST METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
OF ATLANTA

800 North Highland Avenue, N.E.
Atlanta, GA. 30306 (404)872-2246
Rev. Reid Christensen, Senior Pastor

Be Not Afraid

Based on Isaiah 43:2-3 and Luke 6:20ff

BOB DUFFORD, S.J.



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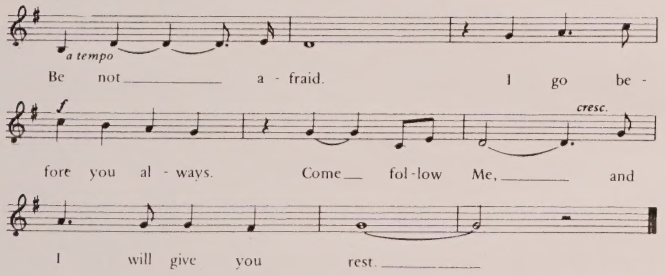

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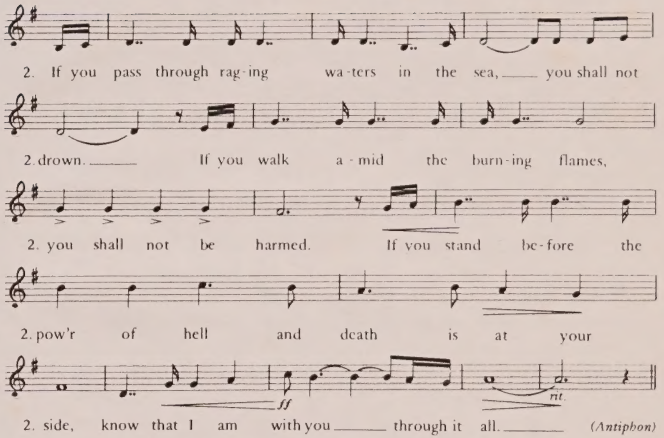
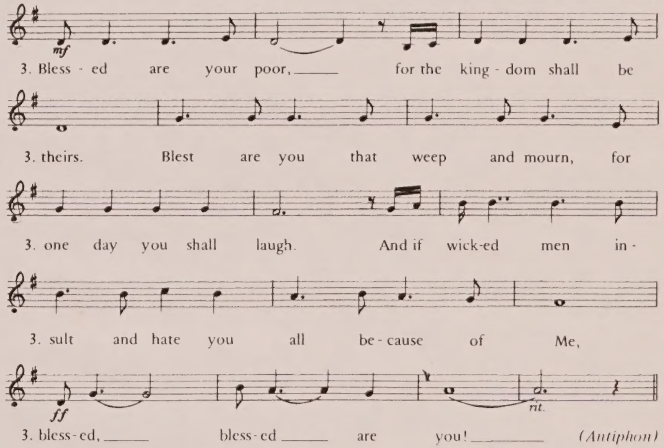
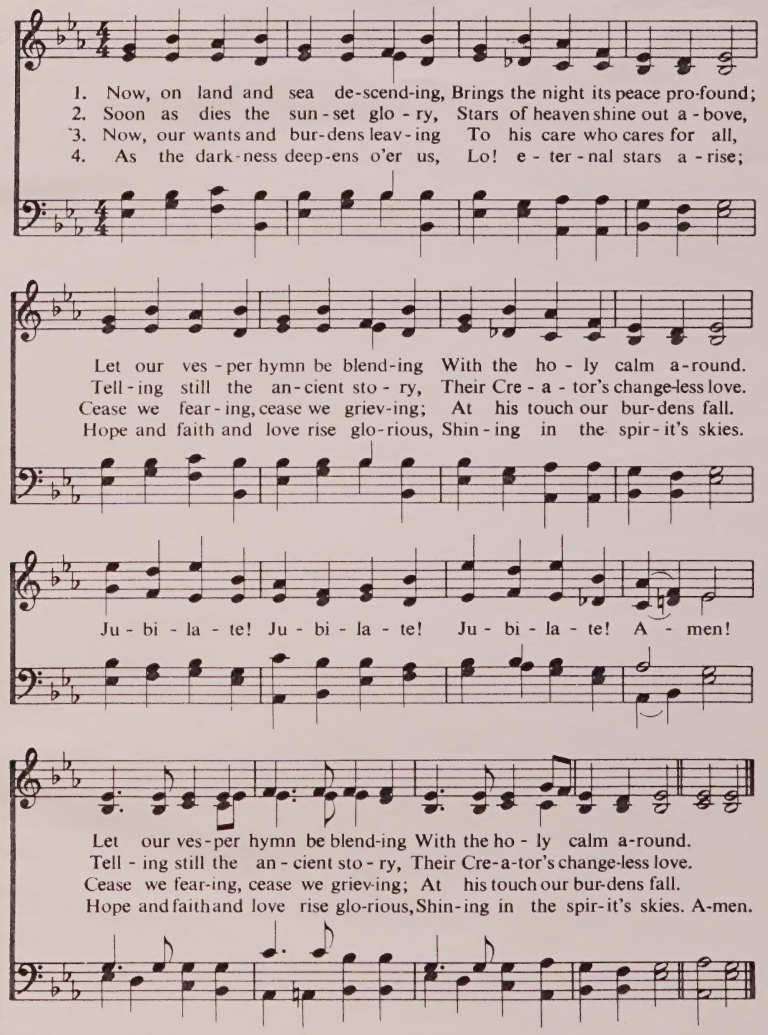




Now, on Land and Sea Descending

VESPER HYMN 87.87.86.87.
Russian Air
A Selection of Popular National Airs, 1818

SAMUEL LONGFELLOW, 1819-1892